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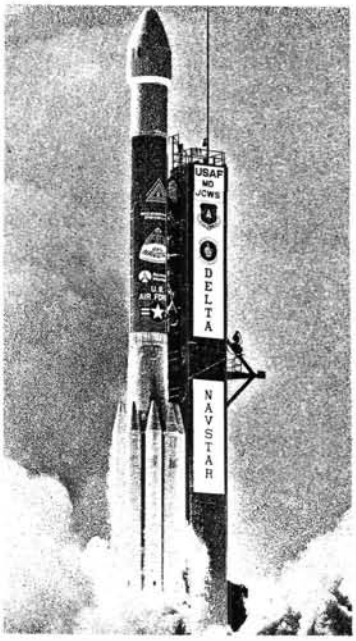

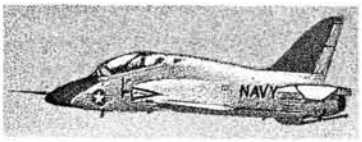

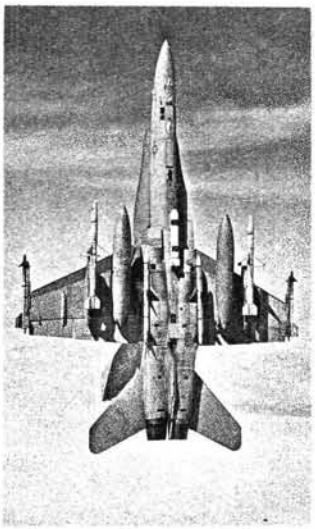

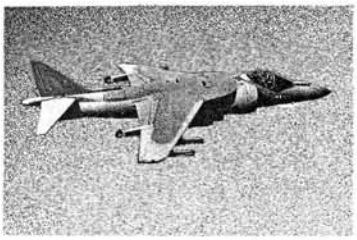

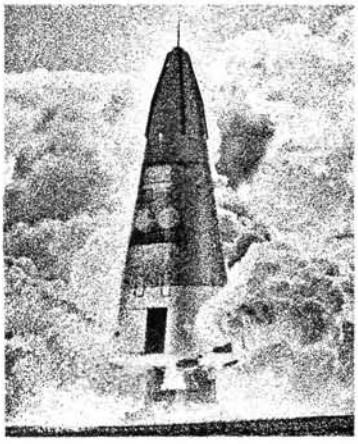

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

OCTOBER 24, 1994

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 4,162

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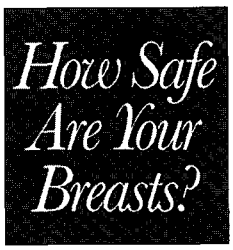

Cover by Eric Baker for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Articles on pages 6, 22 and maybe 16.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 211, Number 43, Issue 4,162, October 24, 1994. (Printed in the U.S. on October 5, 1994.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 10 & 17, July 18 & 25, Aug. 22 & 29, and Sept. 19 & 26, 1994) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. The New Republic Advertising Sales Office (212) 702-4882. Yearly subscriptions, $69.97; foreign, $99.97; Canada, $84.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). © 1994 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Microform, CD-ROM, issue and article copies are available through University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone 1-800-521-0600. Internet mail address: editors@tnr.com Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 602, Mount Morris, IL 61054. For subscription problems call 800-827-1289.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Beauty and the beast

To the editors:
Was there a purpose to the October 3 New York Diarist ("Scenic Beauty") other than to create a forum for Michael Lewis to crow about the great piece of ass he has had the unlikely opportunity to marry? Oh, I guess the point was to reveal the insight he has gained now that he is aware of the special treatment a beautiful woman receives. Newsflash, Michael: you don't have to be a Bloomingdale's model with a "perfectly shaped bottom" to receive crude comments at an airport and hoots and hollers from a construction crew. This type of harassment occurs regularly to us lesser female mortals. And, if they were to occur in the presence of my new husband, I would hope that he would take some action, unlike Lewis, who seems to take pride, and notes for a column.

JAYNE GREENBURG
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

To the editors:
It is discouraging to know that one of your staffers has nothing better to write about than how women are sex objects and to instruct us that the more successful sex objects get lots of perks. That TNR should publish this piece is unacceptable. Women would like to think that there is some way we can succeed in this world other than by appealing to the sex drive of males and getting whatever goodies men may choose to grant us. If there is not, then you might as well kiss all the female readers of TNR goodbye. There will be no advantage to improving our minds, and anyway, we'll be too busy perfecting our bottoms to have time to read.

SARA WERMIEL
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts

To the editors:
I'm still attempting to figure out the point of Michael Lewis's Diarist. Is it simply a smarmy way for Lewis to tell the entire subscriber base, "Hey, I married this incredible-looking woman! And here are the slings and arrows that come with my (outrageously good) fortune." Or, maybe in an editorial meeting someone thought it would be a fab idea to float an article far more suited to *Details* magazine in order to boost circulation. I've been reading TNR for about ten years now, and I can't remember ever coming across anything that reeked of such blatant self-promotion. If you think I'm being a bit drastic, please re-read the article; I think you'll agree with me.

And, if you don't, I have a wonderful article I can sell you on how beautiful my girlfriend is. . . .

JOSEPH E. BORNSTEIN
New York, New York

To the editors:
I would like to add a fifth scenario to Michael Lewis's most recent ode.

Scene Five: Oh, the depths to which one can fall in the presence of Great Female Beauty. Even brash, talented and once-promising young writers such as Lewis can forget what constitutes newsworthy fodder. Faced with such Terrible Beauty, one can convince oneself that three-column blow jobs devoted to "My Trophy Wife, the Bloomingdale Model" is a topic the readers of TNR will care deeply about.

JULIE TILSNER
New York, New York

To the editors:
Our household is laying odds on how long the Michael Lewis-Bloomingdale's model marriage will hold up. No one here gives it more than a couple of years. Where we disagree is on the question of who will bolt first: Michael, when he spots the first sign of cellulite, or his wife, when she realizes that her husband regards her as a commodity? After all, the only name he gives her is "the Bloomingdale woman," her identity deriving entirely from her sex and the company she sells it for. And he has written this column for precisely the same reason that he displays the Bloomingdale's ad above his office desk: to prove his prowess in bagging such a trophy.

JAN LEWIS
JAMES GRIMMELMANN
BARRY BIENSTOCK
Maplewood, New Jersey

To the editors:
While reading Michael Lewis's article on the difficulty of being married to a beautiful woman, I kept waiting for him to assure us that the "trouble" is outweighed by the benefits. This assurance never came. In that I am married to a woman who is exquisitely beautiful, and therefore treated differently by other men and women, I can empathize with Lewis's comments. But please allow me to state unequivocally to any man contemplating marriage to a beautiful woman, the benefits far outweigh the disadvantages.

As to the "weird degradation of being intimately associated with the genuine article" of beauty: hey Mike, get a life! Liberals will cry over just about anything.

BILL ANDREW
Sylva, North Carolina

Michael Lewis replies:
And she can cook too.

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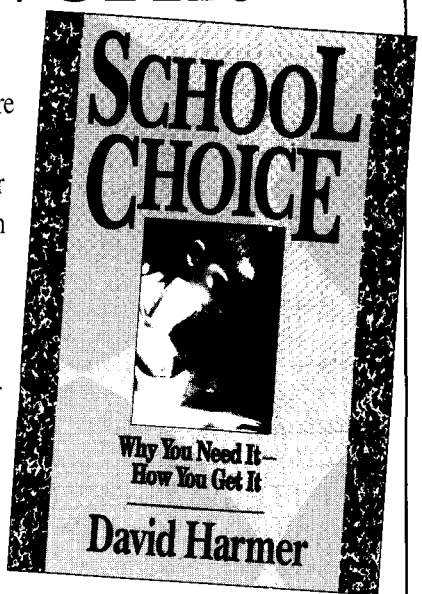

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Virtual Shakespeare

To the editors:

David Gelernter, in "Unplugged" (September 19 & 26), criticizes multimedia for teaching "candy-coated" Shakespeare with scenes acted out, pictures of Elizabethan buildings and even songs! Shakespeare wrote plays, not books. The authentic way to experience Shakespeare would be in an Elizabethan building, the Globe Theater, around 1600 A.D. In schools we often settle for reading the plays. Unfortunately the damn things do include songs and references to Elizabethan culture, hence footnotes aplenty. Multimedia and hypertext sound pretty good to me. If you don't know what an "arras" is you click on the word and get an explanation and an illustration. If you don't grasp the meaning of "To be or not to be ..." you can listen to Olivier give it illuminating expression.

Gelernter bemoans the substitution of machines for drill. Math drill can provide the facility that enhances understanding, but is Gelernter unaware that the computer has revolutionized drill? The machine can teach sums as games. Can he imagine how deadening drill is for the teacher, how welcome is the patient machine? He spellchecked his article. Does his program highlight a word and suggest a change if he requests it? If so, I bet even he could learn from it, though it might not look him in the eye.

JAMES J. SLATTERY
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Get fat, don't die!

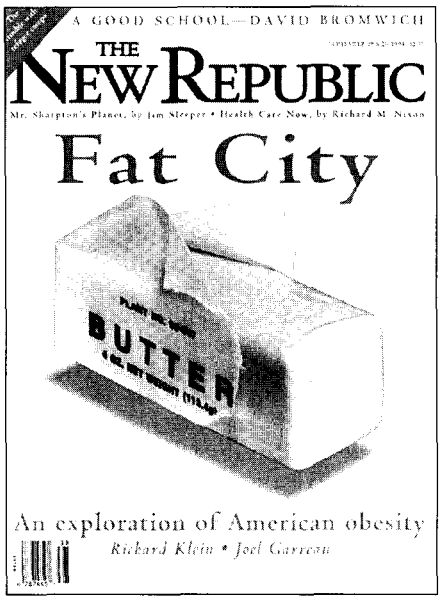
To the editors:

In his September 19 & 26 article "Big Country," Richard Klein claims that obesity causes depression, which leads to more overeating. Right words, wrong conclusion. Overeating occurs because of depression; it does not cause it. Dysphoric moods caused by stress or fatigue can set up an irresistible craving (not hunger) that is satisfied by only one type of food: sweet or starchy carbohydrates. Until recently, such foods were most likely high in fat (though fat itself has no positive effect on mood). But new non-fat sweet and crunchy snack foods will bring about psychological relief for fewer calories than their high-fat predecessors. Research is developing special foods to bring even faster relief from stress-generated cravings, for fewer calories. And fortunately for those whose eating is so impulsive and intense that no will power or special foods will control it, there will be new drugs that fool the brain into believing that snacks have been consumed already. Given the stress and overeating that may have been caused by this misinformed article, these remedies cannot come soon enough.

JUDITH J. WURTMAN, PH.D.
MIT Clinical Research Center
Cambridge, Massachusetts

To the editors:

I feared "Big Country" would be yet another compendium of horror stories and public scoldings for carrying excess flesh. Imagine my surprise and delight to find a thought-provoking and beautifully written article that I have set aside to keep! As a fat woman and a psychotherapist, and, I might add, a healthy person, I welcome any and all attempts to examine this issue of fat from something other than the usual perspective of the health industry. I run a therapy group for fat women trying to deal with some of the many emotional issues that arise from having bodies that depart from the socially sanctioned norms. I plan to distribute "Big Country" to the members of my group.



CHERYL ARONSON
Portland, Maine

Richard Klein replies:

Judith J. Wurtman's judgments may well be colored by her own direct financial interest in a company she founded with her husband, Dr. Richard Wurtman, to produce and sell a drug seeking FDA approval as a so-called obesity drug.

New Balancing act

To the editors:

Sallie Tisdale's "Shoe and Tell" (September 12) has two basic plot lines: good intentions and bad economics. To protect Third World workers from greedy American shoe corporations, Tisdale decided to buy the American-made (at $10 per hour) New Balance 665s rather than the Indonesian-produced (at $1.80 per day) Ladies Reebok. Tisdale's social consciousness may be more comfortable, but the Indonesian workers will most likely be less comfortable from the resulting fall in wages that results in fewer meals, clothes and medicines. Tisdale should put her good intentions to good use: return those New Balance sneakers and buy a new pair of Reeboks. Better yet, buy two pairs.

DAVID LOCKWOOD
Hong Kong, China

Lambda male

To the editors:

Mickey Kaus's analysis of politics through the Darwinian filter of natural selection ("Monkey Business," TRB, September 19 & 26) was perhaps a bit too selective. Kaus claims this paradigm "explains Washington." I am left with some puzzling questions. How do we account for the political female, and an even more arcane permutation, the homosexual politician?

Why are homosexuals discounted? Because we aren't perceived as players in the progenic perpetuation of this status-equals-sex-drive gene? Because the consequences of being public about our homosexual sex drive in today's society are so immense that we self-select out of the game? Because we're perceived as too few to warrant such analysis? Or do we merely obfuscate the argument?

GREIG STEWART
Washington, D.C.

House call

To the editors:

Leon Wieseltier has been a literary editor too long. His September 19 & 26 Washington Diarist ("Notes on the State of Virginia") denigrating Thomas Jefferson's Monticello home was written as though he was reviewing a manuscript from a moron. He wrote of the home, "It looked significant but not strong." Two hundred years looks strong to me! "A folly," he termed the house. Hey, this is the one and only Thomas Jefferson's home we are talking about here. Proper respect is due.

God, I hope Leon never visits my house.

DONALD DAVITT
Prescott, Arizona

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FROM WASHINGTON

Mr. Clean Genes

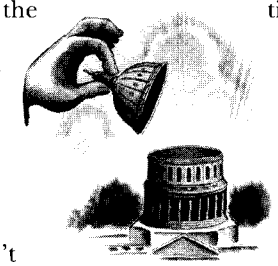
Suppose you are a young married woman and have just found out that you carry BRCA1—the gene that brings an 85 percent chance of getting breast cancer. You already wanted to have children, and now, feeling suddenly mortal, you're especially eager. But you don't want to pass the gene on to them, and you realize there's a way to avoid that. Using in vitro fertilization, you can create several test-tube embryos, each consisting of only a few cells. Then you can screen the embryos for the gene and reimplant those that pass the test.

Should you do it? The answer depends, for one thing, on whether you've got $10,000 to spare. This may sound like a mundane question compared to all the moral imponderables one could ponder here, but in it lies much of the political significance of the recently discovered, much-discussed breast cancer gene. Along with other pathological genes just coming to light, it will make a new kind of argument for universal health care—and, if the argument prevails, will draw the government into the business of eugenics. In the process, the ideological character of eugenics will be redefined.

It will be a year or two before doctors can easily screen people, and thus embryos, for the breast cancer gene. But once these tests exist, they will no doubt be used eugenically. The precedent was set in 1992 by a British woman carrying a gene for cystic fibrosis. Eight embryos were screened for the gene, two were reimplanted, and one survived to birth—a baby girl with healthy lungs.

There are two reasons few women have followed this precedent. First, discovery of the cystic fibrosis gene has led to a nasal-spray treatment for the disease, dampening the eugenic incentive; no such therapy is likely anytime soon for breast cancer. Second, there are only about 1,000 new cases of cystic fibrosis in America each year. Ten times that many women contract breast cancer because of BRCA1, and a like number because of BRCA2, a gene scientists are close to locating. And then there's MSH2, the gene that gives you an 80 percent chance of getting colon cancer. It was discovered last year, and a test for it should arrive before long.

And so on. More and more genes will tempt more and more people to clean up their little corner of the gene pool. Barring government intervention, the pool will get clearer around the affluent but not around the poor. Of course, there's nothing new about health care options being open mainly to the upper socioeconomic classes. You seldom run into a homeless person at a brain-scan clinic. But surely there's something uniquely, intolerably grotesque about creating a genetic underclass, letting a broad range of hereditary diseases settle at the bottom of the social hierarchy.



If you agree, you're left with two choices: either ban eugenic intervention, ensuring that, say, cancer remains an equal-opportunity attacker; or provide money for people who want eugenics but can't afford it. I vote for the latter. And if you vote for the former, you can have the job of telling women with the breast cancer gene that they're not allowed to spend their hard-earned money to spare their daughters the same fate.

Once you start subsidizing eugenics, lines get hard to draw. Mark Skolnick, head of the team that found BRCA1, suffers from "Syndrome X," a genetic defect that encourages heart disease and often kills men in their 40s and 50s. At 48, he sticks to a no-fat diet and hopes for the best. Presumably he'd like any future offspring to live less precariously, and presumably that option will be open once the X gene is found. But what about genes that less dramatically incline us toward heart disease? Skolnick cofounded Myriad Genetics, the company that patented (yes, patented) the BRCA1 gene and will develop a test for it. The company has observed: "The market for testing for the genetic predisposition to cancer, heart disease and other significant diseases potentially includes the entire population."

Indeed. Bringing test-tube eugenics under the rubric of health care will drive home with new force the fact that providing universal coverage isn't cheap. It will also drive home the usually unspoken corollary: providing universal and *comprehensive* coverage is impossible. Hence, more vivid than before, the case for rationing, for discouraging high-cost, low-benefit treatment. Given fiscal reality, we may face a choice between (*a*) keeping a cancer patient alive for an extra week and (*b*) sparing an unborn child from eventual cancer. To me, (*b*) seems the clear winner. On the other hand, when you change (*b*) to "sparing an unborn child from a slightly elevated risk of heart disease," the issue gets trickier.

Test-tube eugenics eventually will touch temperament and intelligence. And though a gene strongly inclining one toward manic-depressive illness or mental retardation might be an easy call, other genes won't be. The geneticist Robert Plomin is studying children with low and high I.Q.s, trying to find a cluster of genes that together appreciably influence intelligence. He says he's getting closer. Should the government support *this* sort of eugenics? And if not, are we willing to see only the affluent use it? (Just what rich people need: expanded educational opportunities.) We could try to ban such uses altogether, but such a ban will be politically hard to sustain if wily international competitors—German, Japanese, Chinese—start permitting this sort of intellectual enrichment.

Eugenics used to connote coercion, the selective *restraint* of reproductive opportunities. The famous 1927 Supreme Court ruling that "three generations of imbeciles are enough" came in support of a state law dictating involuntary sterilization of the "feebleminded" in public institutions. And sometimes, to make matters worse, the grounds for selection were ethnic, as with immigration laws. These racist overtones are one thing that dried up the surprisingly strong early liberal support for old-style eugenics and turned it into a right-wing enterprise.

The new eugenics, in contrast, will *expand* reproductive options and do so in order to keep them level across socioeconomic and ethnic lines. It will draw most of its support from the left, both because of this expensive egalitarianism and because the religious right will blanch at the moral issues raised (though they're in some ways less troubling than those raised by amniocentesis and abortion).

The old eugenics, by its nature, could happen only if the government stepped in and orchestrated it. The new eugenics will start happening unless the government steps in and stops it. It is the political difficulty of stopping it—of saying no to that mother with the breast cancer gene—that will lead the government to accept and regulate it. A large amount of good can result from government involvement, as well as a large amount of creepiness.

ROBERT WRIGHT

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

OCTOBER 24, 1994

THE OCTOBER MASSACRE

For the moment, in the benevolent spirit of bipartisan goodwill, let us set aside the burning political question of the year (which is, for those of you joining late): Who Killed Health Care Reform? There are, after all, any number of equally vexing scores for Democrats and Republicans in Congress to settle before the voting booths open on November 8. Who, for instance, killed campaign finance reform? Who killed mining reform? Who killed trade reform? Who killed environmental reform? Who killed education reform? Who killed ... anyway, you get the idea. How depressing that the Congress we had hoped would yield so much has now, in its final, pathetic days, become conspicuous for yielding so little.

Yet even as incumbents of both parties prepare to return home to grovel before their scornful constituents, the killing spree in the Capitol proceeds. In the Senate, the week began with Republicans planning five separate filibusters to addle votes on five separate issues. Once a grave, last-ditch measure, the filibuster has become the right's favored legislative gear-jammer. Don't like President Clinton's nomination of Ricki Tigert to head the FDIC? Filibuster her. Don't want H. Lee Sarokin named to the Third U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals? Filibuster him, too. There was a filibuster to kill the bill, already passed by the House, to expand lobbyist disclosure laws and eliminate lobbyist-paid dinners and golf holidays. And there was a filibuster against a bill to restrict commercial development on portions of the California desert. Jesse Helms, sulking over the elimination of a school prayer provision, filibustered against providing additional funds to schools in poor districts. "There has never been a series of filibusters blocking movement of bills to conference," fumed Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell. "This is total obstruction." It's hard to view it otherwise. The GOP's blanket policy of "total obstruction" has made a fool of anyone who has tried to compromise with them.

It is now perfectly clear that Senate Republicans are pleased to wreck even those bills they helped create. The final, doomed health care bill limping around the Capitol last month was more a Republican creation than a Democratic one. It was not a Democratic senator who sheepishly quipped, "We've killed health care reform. Now we've got to make sure our fingerprints aren't on it." The thoroughness of the Republican resistance makes it impossible to believe their claims of principled opposition.

But there comes the inevitable question: Are the Democrats any better? Though Republicans have cynically mined the congressional rule book for procedural loopholes to compensate for their diminished powers, would Democrats behave any differently? GOP henchmen can't be blamed for the intransigence on GATT. If South Carolina Senator Ernest Hollings hadn't taken the treaty—and the entire Senate—hostage until after the election, the pact would have moved through quickly. And on the destruction of health care, too, Democrats bear the ultimate burden. It was only because they failed to act as a majority that Republicans were able to thwart Democratic reform bills. It wasn't the first time the party failed to hang together on a crucial issue either. On last year's economic package, Democratic defections left President Clinton barely able to scrape by.

Suppose Newt Gingrich's sweetest dream comes true next month. Republicans take hold of the House and Senate. Bob Dole becomes Senate majority leader. Gingrich becomes House speaker. Would the dread term "gridlock" vanish from the headlines? Not likely. In fact, the entanglements might become worse. Frustrated, narrowly outnumbered Democrats would simply pick up where the Republicans left off. Instead of Republican filibusters in favor of school prayer and tax cuts and Star Wars, we would have Democratic filibusters against them.

The bickering in Congress surely reflects the nastiness of political debate in the country at large. But that bickering also has done much to further sour the public mood. The cycle is vicious. And it is only fitting that our legislators should find, upon returning home, that the lone platform they have to run on is the public's contempt for what they have done. •

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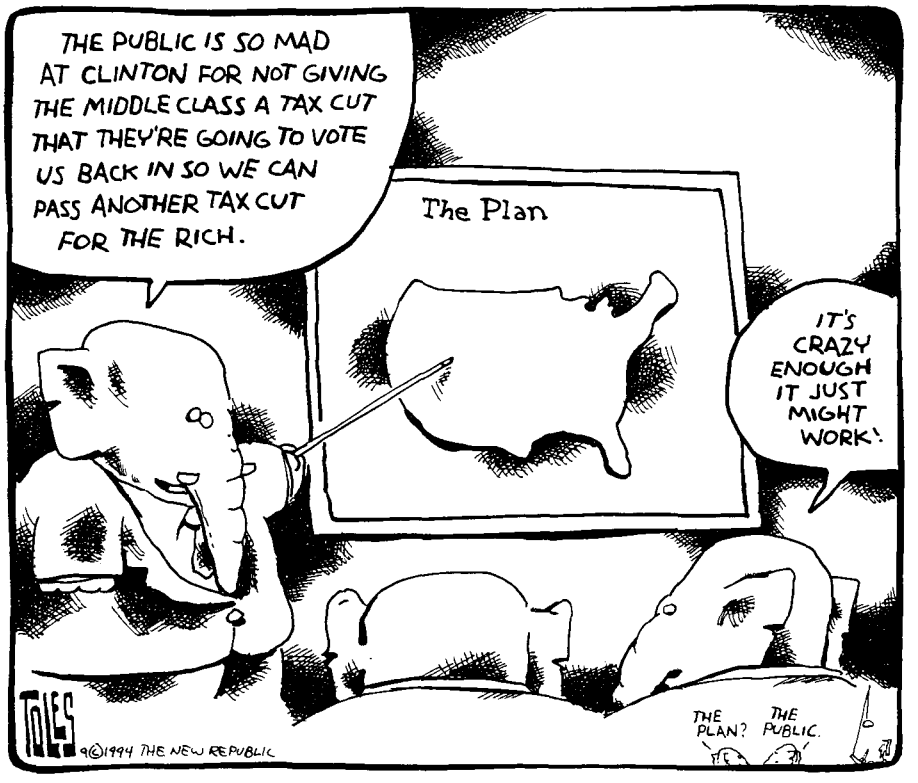
NOTEBOOK

SIC TRANSIT: U.S. troops took over the Haitian parliament. An Estonian ferry sank off the coast of Finland. Talks between the United States and North Korea about nuclear proliferation ended in a stalemate after the North Korean government made undisclosed "bizarre" demands. The voicelog of a Russian plane that crashed in Siberia in March, killing seventy-five people, revealed that the pilot's 16-year-old son was at the controls at the time of the disaster. The Walt Disney Company abandoned plans for a Haymarket, Virginia, theme park. Representative William Clay, chairman of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee, announced his opposition to the Richard Nixon stamp. Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin signed an agreement committed to reducing American and Russian nuclear stockpiles to fewer than 3,500 warheads apiece. Electricity, gas and water were restored in Sarajevo after a two-week cutoff. Former caning recipient Michael Fay sought clinical treatment for a butane sniffing habit after burning his face and hands. Mary Jo Taylor of Dundalk, Maryland, posted a sign outside her home saying, "PARENTS BEWARE: CHILD MOLESTER NEXT DOOR," after seeing neighbor Joseph Driskill, who pleaded guilty to molesting her 6-year-old son, return home. A congressional panel revealed that the Army sprayed zinc cadmium sulfide, a cancer-causing chemical, over 239 U.S. cities in 1958 and 1959. The Senate did not approve legislation to reform congressional campaign financing laws. Former President George Bush said "Broccoli man!" after sighting a truckload of the vegetable in Guatemala City. Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy resigned after it was revealed that his girlfriend received a $1,200 scholarship from Tyson Foods, the country's largest poultry producer. Paula Jones said she would drop her sexual harassment suit against the president if he says he is sorry. John Travolta said, "It smells like I'm going to get another shot at getting good scripts." The South Pacific island of Palau declared independence from the United States.


THE PUBLIC IS SO MAD AT CLINTON FOR NOT GIVING THE MIDDLE CLASS A TAX CUT THAT THEY'RE GOING TO VOTE US BACK IN SO WE CAN PASS ANOTHER TAX CUT FOR THE RICH.
The Plan
IT'S CRAZY ENOUGH IT JUST MIGHT WORK!
TOLES
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THE PLAN?
THE PUBLIC.

JUST IN CASE YOU WERE FEELING NOSTALGIC FOR GEORGE BUSH: The Balkan war crimes tribunal has surely done little to ensure justice for the Bosnian victims of Serbian aggression. It has, after all, no war criminals in its custody, and its courtroom is still being built. Still, even this gesture at justice is too much for Lawrence Eagleburger, former secretary of state and onetime lobbyist for Yugoslavia. "If you don't have Milosevic in your hands, what do you do?" he asked during an edition of "60 Minutes" on October 2. "How do you bring him to trial? Do not assume that this is a case similar to that after the defeat of Germany. This is not a defeated power. This is one that controls the ground." Indeed, Eagleburger, the Bush official who did so much to seal a Serb victory, doubted that even "the little fellows will ever be brought to justice." Instead he advocated amnesty for the likes of Radovan Karadzic in exchange for a peace agreement. "It's not a nice choice, but probably it's the choice to be made."

PORK WATCH: Senator Bennett Johnston of the great, damp state of Louisiana has included this morsel in the appropriations bill for the departments of Commerce, Justice and State: an $11 million laboratory for desperately needed research on fishery habitat, genetic research (presumably of the piscine variety) and the extremely important effects of urbanization on fishery production. In a press release, the Louisiana Democrat crows that he saved the lab from "earlier administration attempts to kill the project," adding that it "continues economic diversification in Acadiana and will provide high-tech, well-paying jobs to keep our kids home." Johnston's press officer is disarmingly frank, admitting, "It could be argued that we're being parochial, but that's an argument we don't mind. It's in the national interest because it's crucial to Louisiana—and other gulf states. Wetlands and fisheries research is a top interest of the U.S." Well, maybe. But cutting $11 million from the federal budget seems to be pretty high on the list, too. •

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Quisling show

In November of 1959, Hans J. Morgenthau, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago, published an article in The New York Times Magazine *defending Columbia University for dismissing instructor Charles Van Doren for his part in the "Twenty-One" quiz show scandal. The article prompted a flood of anonymous letters from Columbia students, all of whom opposed Van Doren's firing. The following is an adaptation of Morgenthau's response to the students, which ran in the December 21, 1959, issue of* TNR.

You are stung by my assertion that you are unaware of the moral problem posed by the Van Doren case, and you assure me that you disapprove of his conduct. But my point is proved by the very arguments with which you try to reconcile your disapproval of Van Doren's conduct with your petition to rehire him. Your concern is primarily with the misfortune of an attractive teacher, your regret in losing him and the rigor of the university's decision. You support your position by five main arguments: the confession has swept the slate clean, Van Doren will not do it again, his teaching was above reproach, academic teaching is not concerned with substantive truth and the university acted with undue haste. These arguments, taken at face value and erected into general principles of conduct, lead of necessity to the complete destruction of morality.

If confession can undo the deed, no evil could ever be condemned and no evil-doer ever brought to justice. If wrong could be so simply righted and guilt so painlessly atoned, the very distinction between right and wrong, innocence and guilt, would disappear; for no sooner would a wrong be committed than it would be blotted out by a confession. Confession, even if it is freely rendered as an act of contrition and moral conversion, can mitigate the guilt but cannot wipe it out.

The argument that the morally objectionable act is not likely to be repeated assumes that the purpose of moral condemnation is entirely pragmatic, seeking to prevent a repetition of the deed. Yet while it is true that according to the common law a dog is entitled to his first bite, it is nowhere written that a man is entitled to his first murder ... or his first lie. The moral law is not a utilitarian instrument aiming at the protection of society, even though its observance has this effect.... Oedipus did not think that it was all right to marry his mother once since he did not do it again. Or would you suggest that evil-doers like Leopold and Loeb should have gone free because it was most unlikely that they would repeat what they had done?

The arguments of the good teacher and of teaching not being concerned with substantive truth go together. You assume ... that the teacher is a kind of intellectual mechanic who fills your head with conventionally approved and required knowledge, as a filling station attendant fills a tank with gas. You don't care what the teacher does from 10 a.m. to 9 a.m. so long as he gives you from 9 to 10 a.m. the knowledge which he has been paid to transmit. You recognize no relation between a teacher's general attitude toward the truth and his way of transmitting knowledge, because you do not recognize an organic relation between transmitted knowledge and an objective, immutable truth. Yet the view that knowledge is but conventional—one conception of truth to be superseded by another—while seemingly supported by the radical transformations of physics, finds no support in the fields of knowledge dealing with man. If it were otherwise, Plato and Aristotle, Sophocles and Shakespeare ... could mean nothing to us, except as objects for antiquarian exploration.

[The argument] that the trustees of Columbia University acted with undue haste is the most curious of all, and it gives the show away.... You look for reasons which justify your unwillingness to transcend that three-cornered relationship among yourself, your teacher and your university and to judge the obvious facts by the standards of morality rather than adjust them for your and your teacher's convenience. You are sorry about losing an attractive teacher and you hate to see that teacher suffer; nothing else counts. But there is something else that counts and that is the sanctity of the moral law.

All men—civilized and barbarian—in contrast to the animals, are born with a moral sense; that is to say, as man is by nature capable of making logical judgments, so is he capable by nature of making moral judgments.... Civilized man shares with the barbarian the faculty of making moral judgments, but excels over him in that he is capable of making the right moral judgments, knowing why he makes them. He knows—as Socrates, the Greek tragedians ... the Biblical prophets and the great moralists and tragedians of all the ages know—what is meant by the sanctity of the moral law.

The moral law is not made for the convenience of man, rather it is an indispensable precondition for his civilized existence. It is one of the great paradoxes of civilized existence that ... it is not self-contained but requires for its fulfillment transcendent orientations. The moral law provides one of them.

You will become aware of the truth of that observation. For when you look back on your life in judgment, you will remember it, and you will want it to be remembered, for its connection with the things that transcend it. And if you ask yourself why you remember and study the lives and deeds of great men, why you call them great in the first place, you will find that they were oriented in extraordinary ways and to an unusual degree toward the things that transcend their own existence. That is the meaning of the passage from the Scriptures, "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

This connection between our civilized existence and the moral law explains the latter's sanctity. By tinkering with it, by sacrificing it for individual convenience, we are tinkering with ourselves as civilized beings, we are sacrificing our own civilized existence.

The issue before you, when you were asked to sign that petition on Van Doren's behalf then, was not the happiness of a particular man nor, for that matter, your own, but whether you and your university could afford to let a violation of the moral law pass as though it were nothing more than a traffic violation. Socrates had to come to terms with that issue, and he knew how to deal with it. You did not know how to deal with it. And this is why you hide your faces and muffle your voices. For since your lives have lost the vital contact with the transcendence of moral law, you find no reliable standard within yourself by which to judge and act.... But once you have restored that vital connection with the moral law from which life receives its meaning, you will no longer be afraid of your shadow and the sound of your voices. You will no longer be afraid of yourself. For you will carry within yourself the measure of yourself and of your fellows and the vital link with things past, future and above.

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CAMPAIGN '94

QUAKELET

By Fred Barnes

PHILADELPHIA

Rick Santorum has the cut of a Sun Belt Republican. He's young (36), married (two kids), religious (Roman Catholic), non-Ivy League-educated (Penn State), a workaholic (employed full-time while in law school) and very conservative (Reaganite, 1990s vintage). Only he's running for the Senate in Pennsylvania, not Arizona. Santorum's self-characterization sounds like a description of Newt Gingrich: "aggressive, a roll-up-your-sleeves guy, an activist ... the Energizer Bunny conservative." His opponent, Democratic Senator Harris Wofford, says that Santorum, if elected, would be the most right-wing senator from Pennsylvania this century. Maybe so. Yet Santorum has at least a fifty-fifty chance of ousting Wofford on November 8.

Santorum reflects the most important trend in the 1994 campaign, aside from the Republican surge itself. Inside the GOP, Reaganism has triumphed. Bushism is dead. Republican candidates nearly everywhere are more conservative than ever, particularly in Senate races and notably in the Rust Belt. Pennsylvania has a modern tradition of electing moderate Republicans: Hugh Scott, Richard Schweiker, John Heinz and Arlen Specter as senators; Bill Scranton, Ray Shafer and Richard Thornburgh as governors. But Santorum is closer ideologically to Gingrich than to these centrists. In Ohio, Mike DeWine, likely to succeed Democrat Howard Metzenbaum, is more conservative than the last Republican senator from the state, Bob Taft Jr. In Missouri, John Ashcroft is markedly to the right of retiring GOP Senator John Danforth, whose seat he's favored to win. Spencer Abraham of Michigan and Rod Grams of Minnesota are more conservative than any Republican senator from their states in decades. "Moderate Republican senators are apoplectic about this," says Vin Weber, a former GOP congressman. Assuming Republicans win a minimum of three or four seats, moderate ranks will shrink and the Senate will be tugged even more to the right.

For Republicans to capture the Senate—seven seats required—Santorum's race is critical. Certainly Wofford is worried, acting more like a challenger than an incumbent. In a debate on "This Week with David Brinkley" on September 25, Wofford attacked, waving his arms, his voice quavering. Santorum, with a laser stare and a half-grin on his face, responded with utter calm. Wofford said Santorum, a House member from the Pittsburgh suburbs since 1990, is an obstructionist and a practitioner of "petty partisanship." Swiping a zinger from Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, Wofford added, "If you took 'no' out of the English language, [Santorum] would be speechless." Santorum played along. "It's a 'no' to more government control of your lives," he said. "I'll very happily stand up here and say we don't need to pay more taxes and we don't need to give up more freedoms to Washington, D.C. I will say 'yes' to solving problems."

By early October, Wofford had aired five T.V. ads, three of them negative. Two are hardy perennials, faulting Santorum for missing congressional votes. The first said he had missed thirty-two votes this year. It was followed by a "news update" noting Santorum had missed three more. "Where was he?" the follow-up spot asked. "Flying first-class to another special-interest campaign fund-raiser." Wofford knew this because he was on the same Pittsburgh-to-Philadelphia flight, sitting in coach. Wofford's chief consultant, Paul Begala, says Santorum is "running an anti-government campaign but living off the government gravy train." His parents are government employees, Begala notes. (Santorum's father is a retired Veterans Administration psychologist, his mother a nurse.) He took a government-backed student loan, a "government low-interest mortgage" and a congressional pay raise. He gets federal health insurance. Wofford, insists Santorum, "is completely focused on character assassination."

When Wofford was elected in 1991 to complete the term of John Heinz, who was killed in a helicopter crash, his campaign was different. The 68-year-old former president of Bryn Mawr College and one-time adviser to John F. Kennedy was the underdog against Thornburgh, the ex-governor and U.S. attorney general. In that race, Wofford invented the health care issue, and won with 55 percent of the vote. Then he came to Washington to get comprehensive health reform enacted. It hasn't worked out. Wofford claims the failure to pass a bill doesn't hurt him. "In 1991 I helped people discover the degree of frustration, even anger, with the lack of action on our problems, most particularly health care. Now the anger is of a different kind." He says the public is furious not at him, but at partisan bickering in Washington. In any event, he talks less about health care. The crime bill, which Santorum voted against, "becomes a defining issue," Wofford argues.

Santorum's rise was as dramatic as Wofford's. A lawyer with Thornburgh's firm in Pittsburgh, he challenged a seemingly invulnerable incumbent, Democratic Representative Doug Walgren, in 1990. Ignored by GOP officials who thought his chances were nil, Santorum stumped relentlessly and relied on a grass-roots organization to win narrowly. In 1992 he was reapportioned into a district with 71 percent Democratic registration and again expected to lose. He won with 61 percent of the vote. In the House, Santorum became a favorite of Gingrich, the GOP whip. In his first race, Santorum had watched tapes sent by Gingrich's political action committee on strategy and issues. "They were helpful," he says. Gingrich backed Santorum for a seat

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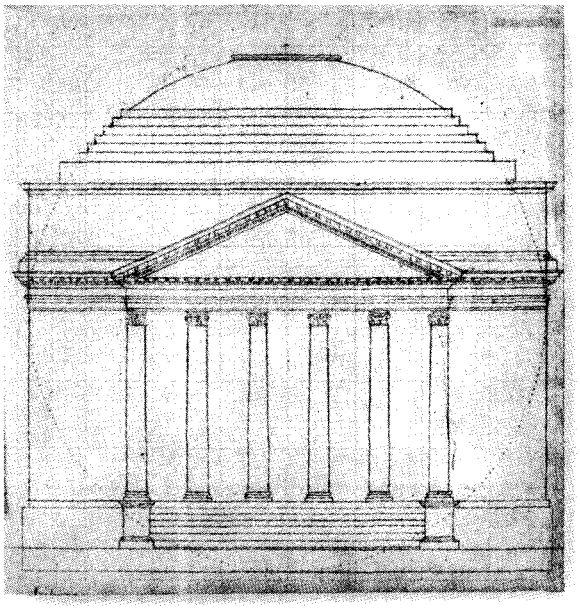

Jefferson's design for the library at the University of Virginia, circa 1817

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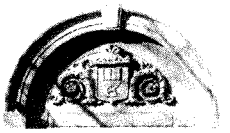

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on the Ways and Means Committee, then chose him to draft the Republican welfare reform plan. Like President Clinton's proposal, the Santorum bill has a two-year cutoff. But it also includes a second cutoff, denying government-created jobs to ex-welfare beneficiaries after three years.

Wofford's strategy is to isolate Santorum as an arch-conservative out of sync with Pennsylvania. "He's part of the far right wing," says Pat Ewing, Wofford's campaign manager. "He's no Thornburgh," adds Begala. Wofford stresses the issues (crime bill, family leave, extension of unemployment benefits, flood relief) on which Santorum is more conservative than Specter, the state's other senator. In another year, this strategy might have worked. But Specter, after months of trying to recruit an alternative, has thrown in with Santorum, thus certifying him as inside the political mainstream. "I gave him a big part of my organization," says Specter, whose son and former campaign manager both work for Santorum.

Still, Specter says Santorum "is not the ideal profile for a Pennsylvania candidate in 1994. My thought was we'd be better off with a pro-choice woman. Pro-choice is preferable in Pennsylvania, though not by a lot." But Teresa Heinz, widow of John Heinz, and Julie Nixon Eisenhower, plus several others, spurned Specter's appeals. What reconciled him to Santorum? "He knows I can win," Santorum says bluntly. Should Republicans control the Senate, Specter will be a powerful figure. So he's persuaded himself Santorum isn't really all that conservative. "His rhetoric and his approach is—I don't want to insult him—moderate. People have the sense he's a pretty level-headed man. I may have helped a little bit on that with my four-square support." In a tight race, a little bit goes a long way. •

UZBEKISTAN POSTCARD

COMMIE TRAPPINGS

By Anna Husarska

In Russia, "glasnost" is a word of the past, but in the Central Asian Republic of Uzbekistan, it hasn't even arrived. Of all the former Soviet republics, Uzbekistan is probably the least reconstructed. Even getting here is like voyaging back in time. Everyone has to go through the Uzbektour tourist office. As in the bad old days, the office demands to know all the details of one's itinerary and issues a visa restricting the dates of travel and specifying the hotels where one can stay. In the Moscow Uzbektour office, I ventured that tourist offices are supposed to *provide* such information rather than solicit it. The four men, who were sitting around eating Uzbek bread and grilled meat with their hands, seemed amused. A fifth man came in wearing only pants and plastic slippers (it was a hot day). The others said something about me in Uzbek, and he looked at me disdainfully.

In Samarkand, the capital of Uzbekistan, the atmosphere was slightly more relaxed, although I knew from my colleagues that trying to meet dissidents was a dead end, with the emphasis on "dead." In the marketplace, a troika of vendors was selling aluminum spoons, candles, string, plastic buckets and fabric hand-sewn bags. Strung up above their heads were red flags bearing hammer-and-sickle logos, Bolshevik slogans, portraits of Lenin and other commie trappings. Then I noticed there were handles attached to the cloth: to my relief, they turned out to be shopping bags sewn from obsolete banners. "Beating swords into plowshares, eh?" I tentatively proposed, feeling like an agent provocateur. "You should not assume, citizen, that we dump all things that belong to the past," one man answered in jest. "For carrying a few kilos of potatoes or a watermelon there is nothing like a first-class crêpe de chine." Like dogs who after sniffing each other start wagging their tails, we smiled at each other. I winked. They winked back. The jester, Boria, explained that flags were once sewn from parachutes. Another man, Sasha, added that the Peasant Cooperative, which makes the bags, is thinking of producing quilts. "For us all to sleep under Vladimir Ilich!" snorted Boria. They invited me to have tea, but I first went to buy some spices.

The part of the market occupied by the spice vendors was enormous. All the stalls displayed books of Communist Party resolutions and other Party literature. Upon inspection, it turned out that these Uzbeks weren't commie freaks either: they tear pages out of the bound volumes to make funnels for pouring spices. Back at my troika's stand, a French tourist inquired about their red bags. Boria and Sasha launched into a discussion of all things French: Is Belmondo a better actor than Louis de Funes? Does France need another revolution? Boria was an admirer of Alexandre Dumas; Sasha's favorite was Guy de Maupassant ("Very sensual for his times"). Tyohta, the third of the troika, had gone off to buy a watermelon.

After the French girl left (she bought two bags), Sasha made tea and commented that the French woman had been dressed too frivolously. A woman, he said, should be frivolous only with her husband in the bedroom. I asked him whether the same went for men. "Yes. Look, there was this crippled French nobleman, he painted for a living, and they say all prostitutes were crazy about him." From Toulouse-Lautrec we moved to Zola, and just as we were to decide whether a Dreyfus Affair could happen in the USSR, Tyohta returned with a gorgeous watermelon, which we ate.

That evening, looking for a bookstore on Communisicheskaya Street, I came across a relic of the Soviet past: a *kolkhoz* market. It had none of the color of the bags-and-spoons stand. Here were huge panels with harvest plans and photographs of outstanding *kolkhoz* work-

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ers, hanging above neatly disposed produce with fixed prices. There were a dozen stands and four customers—pure USSR.

Politically, too, Uzbekistan seems to be the repository of all that was bad in the Soviet system. Islam Karimov, former first secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party, became president in 1991 (elections in Central Asia are won by the traditional 99 percent landslides). His regime is widely regarded as the ex-USSR's worst human rights offender. Dissidents are routinely detained, beaten and then prosecuted at show trials. Some have even been kidnapped from abroad. This is a classic back-to-the-USSR repertoire. Only the kidnapping is a vague novelty along the lines of the Bulgarian umbrella-poison plot of the very cold war period.

In March, six supporters of the moderate Erk group (meaning "will") were arrested for distributing their party literature. Of the three parties that are legal in Uzbekistan, not one disagrees with Karimov on anything. (Recently, the Uzbek parliament voted unanimously to give President Karimov the title "Hero of Uzbekistan"; he was the first to receive the award, which he personally had created a month earlier.) No opposition newspapers operate here, and Karimov has banned most Moscow-based publications; T.V. broadcasts consist mainly of folk music concerts and reports on Karimov's schedule. In April the government closed the journalism school at Tashkent University after students raised questions during a seminar on censorship. In January an American scholar on Uzbekistan, William Fierman, arrived here courtesy of the U.S. Agency for International Development to help develop the country's media. He was kept in Tashkent airport for forty hours before being expelled.

Even those who make it into the country cannot learn much about the opposition because most dissidents were forced to flee. Those who remain have problems meeting foreigners. When Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania came here in June, the authorities arrested two key female dissidents whom he was to see. When Specter protested, Karimov reportedly answered: "These two women are not so important to take up our time." Last year, during the separate visits of Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and former national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, the government detained other dissidents they were to meet. I am glad to report that my visit did not provoke anyone's detention. Without seeing any major dissidents, I heard plenty of dissenting opinions from locals, though it usually took a while to gain their confidence.

In 1987 Strobe Talbott, then a journalist, published a poem in *The New Yorker* on his impressions from an earlier visit to Uzbekistan. It read:

> The Uzbeks invite us to tea, a copious, joyless feast.
> Elsewhere there might be a head bowed, a mention of someone's God.
> But here nothing is blessed. Disks of bread are broken.
> The hosts turn on their guests like a firing squad.

Although the system did not change much in Uzbekistan, I obviously was more lucky with my hosts. •

With spokesmen like these ...

FLACK ATTACK

By Ruth Shalit

"Now, let's take a quick look at that résumé," says Burton Wides, lawyer to exiled Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. "Go ahead. Flip through it." Wides, a partner in the Washington law firm Arent, Fox, Kintner, Plotkin & Kahn, is reclining across a Hepplewhite chair in his office, drinking mineral water and reciting verbatim each bullet on his résumé. "I had a pretty good education at Harvard," he says. "I started Watergate. I started oversight of the CIA. I basically wrote the Voting Rights Act. I like to think I'm not just a K Street flack."

A thickset man with a shock of frizzy white hair, Wides wears a rainbow-striped tie and blue socks with holes in them. His small, pink hands jerk nervously as he speaks. "I spend most of my time correcting the misrepresentations about President Aristide that come out of the Pentagon, the State Department, the CIA and occasionally the White House," he says. "This notion that he's some sort of jungle *primitif* who uses real blood in the Mass and does voodoo stuff and so forth. The notion that he is a dictatorial Hitler with a terrible human rights record who goes around throwing burning tires over everybody." The lawyer leans forward in his chair. "This is not a megalomaniac fiend," he says. "This is a man who has written many pieces of classical and folk music. This is a man who has studied religious psychology in Canada. This is a man whose idea of a hot time is playing soccer with orphans on a Sunday morning."

Wides pauses for a sip of mineral water. "Now, as to his mental stability," he continues. "He's not like you and me, raised in suburbia and everything hokey-dokey. He has some terrible thoughts weighing on his mind. But he's never taken drugs—that is, psychopharmacalogical drugs. They say he's anti-U.S. Well, what would you say if you were a Haitian priest, and a security force trained by the United States, supplied by the United States with weapons and needles and other instruments of torture one day mowed down the voters with assault weapons? Viva la U.S.?"

Moments later, the phone rings. It is a booker from CNN's "Prime News," reminding Wides that he's slated as a guest on the 8 p.m. show. Wides jumps into his silver car and hustles over to the set. As the cameras roll, his pouchy face turns somber. "How many more Haitians will be killed?" he demands of the

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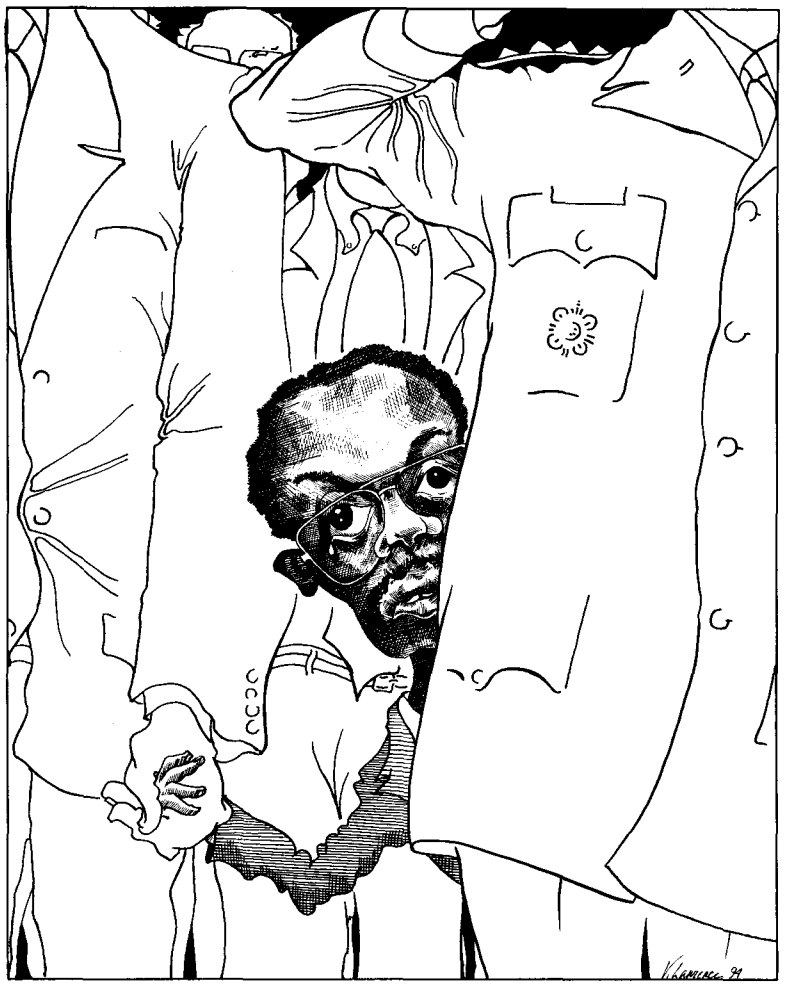
anchor, Bobbie Battista. "How many more lives extinguished? You can imagine the horror for the Haitians who thought they would be protected and now see there is no one to protect them." "Burt Wides," Battista replies, her eyes darkly mournful, "we hope for the best for you and your people."

When Aristide began to assemble his legal team in 1991, he sought attorneys who could handle not only the law but also the media. But his pundit-lawyers have brought their own share of problems. "They are worse than the Mafia," says a producer at NBC's "Meet the Press." "They vie for Aristide's time and ear and compete with one another for bookings. Instead of working hand-in-glove in a coordinated fashion, they stab each other in the back." When Miami attorney Ira Kurzban, another Aristide flack, surfaced one night on "Nightline" to plead his client's case, Wides "was on the phone within seconds," according to an ABC source, demanding to know why he hadn't been asked instead.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Even President Clinton is said to be worried about the cacophony of voices. "Clinton recently told me he thinks that Aristide's main problem is the lawyers around him who have nothing to do but compete against each other and plot these scenarios that are totally unrealistic," says a Democratic representative involved with Haiti. A key player is Wides, whose firm, Arent Fox, extracted $422,680 from the frozen assets of the Haitian government between February and November of 1993. But there are others: Kurzban, Aristide's lead lawyer, whose law firm has been paid more than $500,000 by the government in exile since 1991; former congressman Michael Barnes, whose firm, Hogan & Hartson, makes $55,000 per month off the Haiti account; and D.C. sole practitioner Mildred Trouillot, who is paid $6,000 per month plus rent, expenses and office space.

Barnes defends the magnitude of the effort. "There are fewer lawyers working on this case than on the O.J. Simpson case," he says. "And we're trying to save 7 million people." But too many lawyers can spoil the spin. "Their public relations firm has told us at different times which lawyer we need to turn to," says a senior producer at "Good Morning America." "It seems as if one guy is in one day, out the next. There is a feeling that no one really speaks for him; that it all changes on a daily basis; that there's nobody in charge." "I feel like a producer who has a talent they want to showcase, but there are all these side actors," laments a partner at McKinney and McDowell, Aristide's P.R. firm.

The divisions between all these legal egos have become intense. The main rift is between Wides and Barnes. Wides is a left-wing activist whose grandiosity has alienated many Aristide supporters in Congress; Barnes, as former chairman of the House Western Hemisphere Affairs Subcommittee and director of Clinton's 1992 campaign in Maryland, assiduously cultivates the White House and Capitol Hill. As a longtime friend of deputy national security adviser Sandy Berger, Barnes has the right contacts to promote Aristide's case in Washington; but hard-liners in the Aristide camp say he is so fearful of offending his Clintonite buddies that he has dissuaded Aristide from speaking out against Clinton at times when strong criticism was needed. In July of 1993, as the Congressional Black Caucus blasted Clinton for signing on to automatic repatriation of Haitian refugees, Barnes was praising the president's "determined efforts" to solve the crisis.

Wides elaborates. "If you want to know about the differences of approach, there was an article in the *Legal Times* last June. The story said, as I recall, that Mike was too much of a cheerleader for the White House, trying to convince Aristide to go with the White House program, and that I was more involved in trying to protect Aristide's interests and trying to represent him as a client. But that's their view. I don't comment on that." Barnes, for his part, refuses to criticize Wides. "I don't want to comment on any

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Is It Fair?

One big reason for the mediocre performance of U.S. students is that they have no incentives for working hard. When it comes to going to college or getting a job, it makes very little difference whether a student has done more or less—as long as he or she has done enough to get a high school diploma. So most students do less. And sometimes there are disincentives that actively discourage students from achieving.

I'm not talking now about the informal disincentives posed by other kids who sneer at a youngster who answers questions in class and does the homework—and, in some schools, even beat him up—though that kind of peer pressure is powerful and common. I mean institutional disincentives—official policies or decisions that discourage kids from working hard and achieving.

One recent—and outrageous—example of an institutional disincentive got lots of attention. A private school in Illinois was barred from winning the Illinois Science Fair competition until 1996. Had they done something dishonest? No, they were just too good. Youngsters from the tiny, 362-student school had won the overall state competition four years in a row, so the people running the competition said, "That's enough for you" and changed the rules. Now, even if the students from this school get the points to win next year, the prize will go to someone else. As a comment on the *Chicago Tribune*'s editorial page (May 12, 1994) put it, "Great job. Just don't do it again."

Is it fair to deny achievers the recognition they have earned? Or to discourage disadvantaged kids from making an effort?

Another example of incentives that discourage excellence in a big way is a New Jersey state scholarship program that *requires* poor academic performance. Jackson Toby describes it in "We Lowered Higher Education in New Jersey" (*Measure*, July/August, 1994).

Twenty-five years ago, New Jersey set up the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF). It offered scholarships to New Jersey's public colleges and universities to help disadvantaged students whose families could not afford to send them to college. It was an excellent idea then and it still is: No qualified student should be denied a college education because he doesn't have the money.

But when the regulations governing the law were written, "educational disadvantage" appeared as one of the criteria for eligibility. It was not enough to be economically needy; students were also supposed to be *academically* needy—or, at least, academically underprepared. These regulations are still in place.

How does EOF define "educational disadvantage"? Here are some of the regulations from this anti-scholarship program:

- A student must *not* have "demonstrated a sufficient academic preparation to gain admission to an approved institution of higher education under its regular standards of admission."
- His standardized test scores must be "below institutional norms."
- He must have "an educational background [that] indicates a need for improvement of basic skills."

In other words, an EOF scholarship student should be someone a college would not ordinarily consider for admission and who is so poorly prepared that remedial work is necessary before a real college program can be undertaken.

And, Toby says, we are not talking about a couple of students a year: "Each New Jersey public college must reserve one out of ten places in its freshman class for EOF students." So the program has had serious implications for New Jersey colleges. Toby gives as an example the Rutgers University College of Engineering. The college "has difficulty finding students who want to become engineers, who meet the EOF 'educationally disadvantaged' criterion and who also seem likely to succeed in an engineering curriculum. Even with a great deal of remedial work, the College of Engineering has twice as high a flunkout rate for EOF students as for non-EOF students."

Students who get a college scholarship *because* they are badly prepared probably feel like second-class citizens, which they are. And the message the EOF regulations send to economically disadvantaged youngsters who are still in high school is patronizing and counterproductive: "We don't expect you to work hard so you can meet regular standards. In fact, you'd better not."

If you asked for an explanation of the EOF rules—or the Illinois Science Fair's exclusion of the top-scoring team—I imagine you'd hear about fairness, giving a chance to young people who might otherwise not have one. But is it fair to deny achievers the recognition they have earned? Or to discourage disadvantaged kids from making an effort—and reward them if they don't? Would anyone suggest that a college football or basketball team be required to accept (and give special bonuses to) a certain percentage of students who were weak players—or that a team be barred from competition because it had won too many games?

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1994 by Albert Shanker.

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other people," he says. "We've had a good team. Everyone has contributed their own strengths."

The tensions broke into the open in July of 1993, during the negotiation of the Governor's Island accord that sought to restore Aristide to power. According to sources present, Wides became convinced Aristide was being pushed into a sellout. "He became absolutely unbearable," says a U.N. negotiator. "We were trying to have a reasonable negotiation. All of a sudden, voices were being raised. Doubts were being cast on integrity. He was shouting and attacking people and saying stupid things." At one point, Wides buttonholed Dante Caputo, U.N. special envoy to Haiti. "He took me aside," recalls Caputo. "He apparently thought that as a foreigner, I would be sympathetic. And he started talking against his own country. He was seeing conspiracy all around, saying that this was all a CIA and State Department plot. He talked about his own background, saying that he was in Harvard, he was doing this and that. I was quite surprised by this person." The proceedings deteriorated into farce when Wides was caught spying outside Caputo's apartment in Governor's Island. "Larry Pezzullo [the former envoy to Haiti] and Dante were talking on the balcony of Dante's apartment," recalls one government official. "Suddenly one of the guys from the State Department said: Be careful, because that guy down there is trying to listen. We looked down, and we saw Burt in the garden, hidden behind a tree." During the final round of negotiations, Barnes, exasperated at his co-counsel's antics, tried to throw Wides out of the room. He failed. "Burt faced him down," recalls Bob White, one of the advisers present at the negotiations. "And he was allowed to stay. There was no way you could get this 280-pound man out of the room without using physical force."

As the Aristide camp continues to fret over the Carter deal—Wides calls it "a joke"—Barnes's conciliatory approach has begun to lose credibility. "Mike was going on T.V. saying, 'President Aristide is grateful, he's grateful,' " says one Aristide source. "Well, he is not grateful. He has some legitimate concerns over where this thing is headed. That gives new weight to some of Burt's theories." Among supporters of Aristide in Congress, Wides's wider role is cause for dismay. "Many of us who want to support Aristide are baffled by his inability to appoint ministers for justice and planning to get the process of reconstruction going," says New Mexico Democratic Representative Bill Richardson. "One of the problems may be this coterie of advisers who I feel are feeding the worst part of him: that he doesn't have to yield on anything, that everything should be delivered to him by the United States of America."

In the weeks following the U.S. invasion, President Aristide tapped Kurzban to oversee his transition and announced that Wides would manage relations with the Haitian parliament. (Barnes was shut out of a transition post). Aristide's decision to give his squalling legal team a role in forming his government has met with bewilderment. "I had thought, in my naïveté, that this was the time for the whitefaces to butt out," says a top U.N. negotiator. "I have serious concerns that these guys are not going to help him get back to Haiti under terms that would lead him to govern properly and build the coalitions he will need to be successful. If Aristide has so much trouble coordinating his advisers when he's safely in exile in Washington, how in God's name is he going to put his country back together again?" •

Rudy Giuliani's Victorian crusade.

TITILLATION

By Michael Lewis

You can almost hear the resigned sigh of shame as you pass from the street beneath the Queensboro Bridge and through the door of Scores. Though it is Tuesday, and well past midnight, more than 500 otherwise respectable looking men in suits sit around an acre of tables while eighty nubile young women strip off their sequined ballgowns and dance topless for them. "Look around," says Lonnie Hanover, the spokesman for Scores, "this is a married guys night. On weekends we get the single guys. Look around! There is not one ounce of cellulite on any of these girls. They go to the doctor before they come here. And look! Notice how they look at a guy's eyes ... makes him feel special." I look. Beside me a woman in a g-string gazes into the middle distance as she grazes her bottom against a stockbroker's crotch. "We might not be politically correct," says Lonnie, "but nobody leaves unhappy."

As you listen to this spiel, you realize suddenly that Lonnie and the club he represents have discovered, or perhaps merely rediscovered, a secret: when a man pays a woman $5 to watch her through a peephole while she dances in a g-string, it is called perverted; when he pays the same woman $2,000 to remove her ballgown and writhe on his lap, while another man in black tie hovers by his side chilling a bottle of Cristal and Fred Belitnikoff catches touchdown passes over his head on T.V. screens, it is called business entertainment. Money buys a lot of things in New York, including a reprieve from shame. "We are not in the porno business," says Craig Carlino, president of the company that manages Scores. "We are not in the sex business. You find me a porno place with a four-star restaurant with a lobster tank and a maître d' who speaks three languages."

On some, this fine distinction will forever be lost. A

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few weeks ago, when Mayor Rudolph Giuliani announced his proposal to quarantine New York's sex industry, he cited the rapid spread of expensive topless bars such as Scores as one of his main targets. After a year's moratorium on any new business classified as "adult entertainment," the city intends to remove Scores to one of three unsavory waterfront neighborhoods: a strip below 59th Street along the Hudson River and a pair of swaths around the city's two airports. It will further require the various establishments within the newly created pink-light districts to remain at least 500 feet from one another, to prevent the clustering effect one finds in Times Square. (To which the spokesman for Scores replies: "We believe in free enterprise. We believe in all the various amendments. We're Constitutionalists.")

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

In preparation for the inevitable legal challenge, the city government is arguing not that pornography is inherently evil, but that, unlike other commercial activity, it imposes upon its immediate environment "secondary impacts" such as higher crime rates and lower property values. Evidence of this is supposed to reside in the Department of City Planning, which over the past year has studied six New York City neighborhoods and produced a cold, pink sixty-five-page report titled Adult Entertainment Study. "Too often, the arrival of these establishments drives down property values in a community and creates public safety concerns. That is why we are taking aggressive action," the mayor's press release blares.

As it turns out, what the City Planning report actually says is closer to the opposite of what the mayor claims it says. To find the proof of "secondary impacts," the reader must first contend with a slew of fishy, anonymous anecdotes and the report's questionable premise: that we in New York find ourselves in the midst of a pornography boom. (This boom is deduced from the changing number of "adult entertainment businesses" in New York City over the past thirty years: nine in 1965; 151 in 1976; 131 in 1984; 177 in 1993. The obvious conclusion of the trend—that while something very dramatic happened between 1965 and 1976, not a great deal has happened since—is mysteriously ignored.)

At last, a few pages from the end of the report, arrives the hard evidence. In six New York City neighborhoods the department compared the crime rates and property price changes of a small area surrounding a sex business to a putatively similar area devoid of commercial prurience. The result: neighborhoods with a sex shop experienced *lower* crime rates and claimed *higher* assessed property values than those not pornographically blessed. Between 1986 and 1992, in four of the six sexually charged "survey" areas, property values rose more quickly than in the sexually dormant "control" areas. By a similarly slim margin, police reported more criminal complaints in the sex-free neighborhoods. And given the desire of any business for law and order, as well as the tendency for these particular businesses to spring up in low-rent buildings in fairly desolate neighborhoods, this only makes sense.

The report's conclusion, however, is not that every neighborhood should be so lucky to sport at least one topless bar and one distributor of pornographic videos. It is, among other things, that "the analysis of trends in assessed valuation relative to adult entertainment uses was inconclusive." One stated reason for this is that in any complex urban setting the "secondary impacts" of a sex business tend to be overwhelmed by other factors. Which is precisely the opposite of the point Giuliani is making. Another reason is that "assessed values are not a sensitive indicator of much of anything," according to planning department chief Joseph Rose. Then why study them in the first place?

The answer lies as surely in the peculiar zeal of the moral reformer as in the pages of his report. The real reason for the proposal would be obvious if the mayor

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did not take so much trouble to disguise it: to restore shame. (The more he succeeds in this, the more likely that property values will fall in neighborhoods containing a sex shop.) The point of these laws is to keep the activities they address in the shadows without actually having to say that they are wrong. But of what occurs inside places like Scores, filled with politically influential people, Giuliani has said almost nothing, other than vague references to "quality of life," whatever that means. And so he's opted for the hypocritical solution, Victorian rather than Puritanical morality.

The main result of the moralist's unwillingness to moralize honestly is that the city is forced into a false position. Only when you actually walk through the map do you get the full sense of unreality of the Adult Entertainment Study, which conjures up images of unsullied communities teeming with small children suddenly invaded by a flotilla of bearded pornographers and an armada of topless dancers. As a reality check, I visited one of the two study areas in which the evidence actually supports the department's and the mayor's conclusions. It is a rectangle in the heart of Manhattan running from 14th to 31st Streets, between Fifth and Seventh Avenues. The map at the back of the report shows, toward the south end of the area, a neighborhood blissfully free of sex, and, toward the north, a cluster of black dots representing four sex shops. Crime was lower and property values higher in the sex-free zone. Small wonder, this. North of 23rd Street the streets grow very tawdry; far from a consequence of the presence of pornography, the pornographers seem, if anything, to have improved the tone of the neighborhood by moving into previously abandoned buildings.

The nearest thing to a concentration of pornography in the district I found, after a long search, on Sixth Avenue between 23rd and 24th Streets. Here, on either side of the 727 Hardware Co., converge Billy's Topless Bar and an x-rated video distributor. Asked if it would help if the city removes the businesses, Irina Levin, the hardware store's owner said, "It wouldn't make any difference at all." How did it affect the crime rate when, after she'd been in business six years, the pornographic video store moved in next door? "It didn't. It was always the same." How would it affect her quality of life if the businesses were removed? "I don't know. It would be too bad. We're very friendly with Billy's bar. They've been here a long time. Maybe twenty years. They're nice people."

A half-hour later I finally located the last black dot at the northern end of the survey area: the Serendip Video store. It consisted of a few hundred square feet on the ground floor of what was, three years ago, the husk of a torched building. When the store opened two years ago, according to the owner, a sheepish Indian man who declined to disclose his identity, most of the block was deserted. "No one can see anything from the outside, and we don't let anyone under 21 in," he said when I showed him his black dot in the Adult Entertainment Study. "I don't understand how we could bother anybody." I then asked him why his windows were covered with steel plates. "The kids broke my windows ten or fifteen times. There's a club over there, the Limelight, they come out of there and cause trouble." In the world of Adult Entertainment Studies, of course, it is the minors who need to be protected from the video store. In real life, it is the pornographic video stores that need to be protected from minors. •

The staying power of Germany's chancellor.

THE FAT MAN

By Charles Lane

BERLIN

If, as polls suggest, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) wins his country's national elections on October 16, he will surpass the fourteen years in office logged by Konrad Adenauer. Why is Kohl so successful? German analysts talk about a recent upswing in the economy, the chancellor's iron grip on the ranks of his own party, the mistakes of his Social Democrat opponents. All true. Still, I favor Ulrich Dieckert's explanation. I met Dieckert, a young, politically aware lawyer from West Berlin, on the Berlin S-Bahn, after watching an appearance by Kohl and Bill Clinton at the Brandenburg Gate. Noting the contrast between President Clinton's upbeat JFK rip-off and Kohl's wooden talk about "the bridge over the Atlantic," I asked Dieckert how the Germans, who love Clinton, can seem so fond of their own boring chancellor. He just smiled: "It's because he's so fat."

This is not just a joke. Helmut Kohl's is not the charisma of a Clinton, much less that of a *Führer*. It's the anti-charisma of that sedate postwar West German social icon, *der Manager*. To his supporters, Kohl is no *Kohlkopf*, or Cabbagehead, as his critics call him. He's an *Eichenschrank*—an oak chest—standing thick and tall and solid. To Americans, Germany is "liberal" because of its social welfare system. Actually, the safety net is an index of Germany's psychological conservatism, its abiding pursuit of "security." And, says Werner Hoyer, secretary-general of the Free Democratic Party (FDP), the CDU's parliamentary coalition partners, "Kohl represents 300 pounds of security."

In the late twentieth century, a German need for security is understandable, and Kohl feels this in his petit bourgeois bones. His father, Hans Kohl, was a *Finanzbeamter*, or local tax official, in the state of

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Rhineland-Palatinate. The elder Kohl went to Mass on Sundays and fought for Germany as an officer in both world wars. His brother died at Verdun. Hans Kohl's eldest son, Helmut's brother Walter, was wounded in World War II on the Western Front, and ultimately died when he was struck by the debris of a shot-down aircraft.

At the end of the war, 15-year-old Helmut, too, was preparing to do his part. He was in Berchtesgaden, site of Adolf Hitler's Bavarian Eagle's Nest, training in the *Volkssturm*, Nazi Germany's last-gasp force of old men and adolescent boys. After the Nazi defeat, Kohl trekked home to the Rhineland through a landscape of ruin, refugees and horror. At one point, he saw the body of a Waffen S.S. soldier dangling from a tree. The sign around his neck read, "I am a traitor." The dead soldier was about his brother Walter's age.

Two years after the war ended, Kohl went into politics, his only career. He joined Adenauer's CDU—the political descendants of the Catholic Center Party for which Hans Kohl voted in Weimar days. In 1969 he was elected as a whiz-kid prime minister in his home state of Rhineland-Palatinate. In 1973 the CDU made him party leader. Nine years later, he seized the chancellorship from Social Democrat Helmut Schmidt by precipitating, and winning, a no-confidence vote in parliament.

The West Germany that shaped Helmut Kohl, and that he helped shape, was not quite the "normal" country Adenauer had wanted. It was protected from the Soviets (and from the responsibilities of full sovereignty) by U.S. military power, just as East Germany was protected from the world economy by Soviet power. Now, both protections are gone. Germans must face, alone, both East Germany's past and the remaining legacy of Nazism—most frighteningly in the form of the resurgent violent right. They must face demands from allies to take a greater role, and a military role, in world affairs.

Kohl's promise, essentially, is security during such uncertainty. "'No experiments' is the underlying theme of our campaign," says Kohl speechwriter Michael Mertes. This may well be what Germany wants, but is it what Germany needs? The chancellor, to be sure, has faced up to some new realities, particularly abroad. He argued that Germany's military should shoulder more of the burden of United Nations missions outside the NATO area, a battle he won this summer in the German Constitutional Court. Kohl wants to anchor Germany in a European Union (E.U.) that would be extended to the east, while assuaging Russian fears and maintaining its bedrock partnership with France—the country where two generations of Kohls spilled blood within this century.

But there are tensions between Kohl's two goals of a robust, united Germany and a robust, united Europe, not least because a sovereign Germany under Kohl feels it needs to defer less and less to the fears and insecurities others in Europe still feel about Germany. Britain is especially uneasy, vetoing a German-inspired nomination for E.U. president, and resisting a new monetary arrangement whereby more economically sound European states would move to currency union quicker than the rest.

It is also far from clear that "no experiments" is an adequate prescription for domestic renewal in a society that suffers increasingly from a shortage of innovation and risk-taking. Germany's high-wage, high-regulation economy faces a long-term crisis of competitiveness. While Kohl admits the need to make German companies more flexible, he hasn't risked much political capital on these ideas. He even failed to push through a bill to end Germany's absurd ban on retail discounting.

Kohl has always preferred history to economics. A prosperous Germany, to him, is a fait accompli, a matter for the managerial class to handle. His sights are set on a rather different legacy: a lasting imprint on Germans' sense of national identity. Kohl sees himself as the last avatar of a "bridge generation" that, as he once put it awkwardly during a visit to Israel, enjoyed "the mercy of being born late." Thus he feels both morally authorized and uniquely qualified to mold Germans' self-perception. From the beginning of his term, Kohl has been engaged in this exercise in mental nation-building. His first speech as chancellor proposed a history museum in Bonn on the achievements of the Federal Republic. This summer, the ultramodern Museum of Contemporary History opened. One of its exhibits was Konrad Adenauer's Mercedes.

But at times, a responsible and Euro-friendly patriotism veers close to ugly nationalism. Kohl's 1985 visit with Ronald Reagan to Bitburg, the cemetery where Waffen S.S. soldiers are buried, was a natural gesture for a child and brother of ordinary Germans who fought on what Kohl came to believe was the wrong side in World War II—but who were not, in his eyes, inherently bad people. Kohl met Kurt Waldheim in Munich. He supported changing the Neue Wache Building in East Berlin, which had been dedicated to victims of fascism, into a bland monument to all the victims of war and tyranny. The leftist German daily *Tageszeitung* mocked it as a "memorial to sadness of all kinds." When right-wing violence erupted in Germany shortly after reunification, Kohl led a national exercise in denial. CDU spokesmen said the arson and beatings were the work of a few misguided punks. The chancellor refused to attend funerals of the Turkish victims of fire-bombings in Mölln and Solingen, an idea one aide branded "condolence tourism." A serious crackdown began only after Mölln.

Kohl was right that Germany's generous asylum provision was no longer suited to a time when Germany's eastern borders were wide open. His aides swear he would have attended the funerals, but feared his presence would spark violent protests. Immigration has declined since the asylum rules were tightened, and so has right-wing violence. Support at the polls for right-wing parties also has collapsed, the very result Kohl's aides say he intended to achieve.

Nevertheless, the chancellor gave much symbolic ground to the right in order to co-opt it. Immigration is not only a matter of Germany's need for more young

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workers to support its aging population. It is also a question of national identity—of whether the country can shed its ethnically rooted concepts of German citizenship in favor of a more republican notion. The episode showed the downside of Kohl's imperviousness to, and occasional contempt for, criticism. Kohl would often rather speak to his chronically insecure people in comforting, self-justifying terms than issue moral challenges. "Germany is not an immigration country," he said, parroting a popular but unreal line.

Yet as Kohl and his bridge generation age, and postwar Germans move into power, competing views about German interests and identity will sharpen, possibly resulting in a reconfiguration of the German ideological and party structure with which Kohl is so familiar. The likely next leaders of both the CDU and SPD are further to the right and left, respectively, than the parties' current candidates. Germany is not immune to the trend toward voter discontent and party realignment in all the Western democracies. And since reunification, a new pool of voters—East Germans—has been injected into the system. They have weak attachments to the old parties of West Germany, and many of them are reeling from the changes imposed on them by the end of communism.

Hence the phenomena of the year in German politics: the rise of the former East German Communists as an anti-Bonn *Ossi* protest party; and the decline in support for the FDP, which might not get the 5 percent needed to join parliament and form another coalition with the CDU. If the FDP does collapse, Kohl could be cheated of his expected triumph, and forced to lead a "Grand Coalition" with the SPD. It could even mean a "Red-Green" government of the left, supported, if not joined, by the former East German Communists. Kohl is doing his best to exploit this: but his red scare only seems to underscore his lack of any real fresh ideas.

Germany's political landscape needs a rethinking, of which Kohl is perhaps incapable, and which Kohl's perpetuation in power at least partially postpones. Indeed, German party politics has wilted a bit in the shadow of the *Eichenschrank*. His CDU is united but, in terms of fresh talent, hollow—thanks to Kohl's efforts to marginalize potential rivals. The SPD, Greens and former Communists all share in the crisis of the Western left. The FDP is at the brink of extinction. None is a particularly promising alternative to Kohl. Indeed, Germany could do much worse than four more years of the fat man. But someday it will have to try to do better. •

A chilling case study in health care reform.

How Safe Are Your Breasts?

By Malcolm Gladwell

At one point during his testimony before a congressional hearing on breast cancer in January, Samuel Broder, director of the National Cancer Institute, was asked what seemed to be a simple question.

"Dr. Broder," said Henry Waxman, the powerful head of the House Health and Environment Subcommittee, "assume you have a patient who is a woman 45 years old.... She has read about breast cancer, is concerned about whether to get a mammogram. In your professional judgment, would you recommend [one]?"

Broder's response takes up two and one-half pages of the hearing transcript. He talks about the "sanctity" of the doctor-patient relationship, about the necessity of explaining the risks of false positive or false negative results, about letting the patient participate in the process. His answer, when it finally emerges, is less an answer than a kind of painful circumlocution.

"I would say, however," Broder said, "that—to keep the discussion focused on what we are saying today—it would be wrong for the health care provider to attempt to induce the woman to obtain mammography or to say the basis of the decision, whatever it might be, is informed by the fact that mammography in that age group has been shown to save lives."

This was an extraordinary moment. For a generation, mammography has been touted as the only effective weapon against breast cancer, the best way to find tumors while they are still small enough to treat. In the mid-1980s the National Cancer Institute itself became the principal cheerleader for mammography, gathering every medical organization in the country together to urge that all women older than age 40 receive regular breast x-rays. Yet here, under oath before a congressional subcommittee, the government's chief cancer expert could not bring himself to say "yes" to what was once the simplest of questions. What happened?

MALCOLM GLADWELL is the New York bureau chief for *The Washington Post*.

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The answer is one of the most depressing tales of our new era of cost-conscious medicine. Last December, after two years of study, the NCI decided to revise its guidelines on mammography. The only women who should get regular mammograms, the institute now said, are those aged 50 and over. For women in their 40s—30,000 of whom will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year—the institute's experts declared that they could find no evidence that routine mammography resulted in a "statistically significant reduction in mortality."

This decision was supposed to be based on a hard reading of the available medical data. But in reality it was far from that, and this is where the trouble begins. The NCI looked at only some of the available data; when judgments were made, they were made narrowly and tendentiously. Some studies were misinterpreted, others ignored. It was science gone awry, and the consequences for the health of American women are obvious. Given the NCI's enormous influence on the way medicine is practiced, the new guidelines mean that fewer younger women will ask for mammograms, fewer doctors will order them and fewer insurers will pay for them. It means the war on breast cancer has been scaled back.

But the implications go much further than this. When the NCI announced its decision, it was quickly endorsed by the Clinton administration and hailed by health economists as an example of how medicine can learn to hold the line against unnecessary health care. This is the new age of cost-conscious medicine, when medical advances are celebrated as much for saving money as for saving lives.

There is nothing wrong with this, of course. But the unanswered questions about this new climate of constraint are whether it will compromise the ability of the medical industry to defend the public health, and whether, in the end, the cost-cutters will know the difference between what is necessary and what is unnecessary. The battle over who should receive a breast x-ray was the first real test. The results were not encouraging.

The idea behind mammography is one that informs all cancer prevention: the earlier a tumor is detected and removed, the better the chance of defeating the cancer entirely. Since a lump that can be felt by a woman or her physician can be several years old, radiologists in the 1960s began x-raying breasts, to screen for tumors while they were still in their infancy.

As logical as this strategy sounds, it was by no means clear—at least in the beginning—that it would actually save lives. Screening tests for cancer work only if they are accurate and detect tumors early on. The pap smears given to women for cervical cancer, which are credited with saving thousands of lives, clearly do this. By contrast, the test for prostate cancer has never been shown to save any lives. Why? One hypothesis is that even though prostate exams pick up small tumors, they still don't find them early enough to make a difference in treatment. It is also possible that prostate exams are simply discovering what scientists call "silent tumors," tumors that just sit there and, if left undetected, never would have amounted to anything. If mammograms only picked up cancers that had already inflicted their damage, then, encouraging women to have them would be a waste of money. And if all they did was pick up silent tumors, they would only create a lot of unnecessary worry and needless surgery.

There was a second consideration beyond whether mammography saves lives. What if mammography worked, but only among women of a certain age? This was not an idle concern. As women get older, their breasts become less and less dense. Breast tissue is converted into fatty tissue, which makes it much easier to look for tumors with an x-ray. Older women also get breast cancer far more frequently than younger women; national rates for women in their 60s are as much as three times as high as the rates for women in their 40s. Put simply, mammography might work brilliantly in older women while proving a waste of effort and money for those ten or fifteen years younger.

With these questions in mind, scientists over the past thirty years have conducted studies on the effectiveness of mammography, directly comparing the experience of women who have received regular mammograms with those who have only had their breasts examined by hand during clinical examinations. Eight of these studies have now been completed, and the data show a remarkably consistent pattern: for women over 50, mammography saves lives. For those under 50, the evidence is equivocal. Two of the studies showed that women who were not given mammograms lived slightly longer than those who were, although the difference was too small to be statistically significant. One showed no difference. The remaining five showed an advantage for mammography, but the studies were not large enough to show whether the edge was real or merely the result of chance.

When the National Cancer Institute met in 1987 to formulate a policy on mammography, it recommended annual mammograms for women over 50 and, in deference to the uncertainty for younger women, one- to two-year exams for those in their 40s. Then, in November 1992, the results of the Canadian National Breast Screening Study were published. This was the largest mammography study ever, and the first to specifically address the question of whether mammography worked for women aged 40 to 49. When it also showed no statistically significant advantage for mammography, the cancer institute reconvened its experts. After months of deliberation, the institute revised its guidelines.

It all seemed so straightforward and logical, medicine at its sober and exacting best. It was not.

The first step in understanding where the NCI went wrong in its assessment of mammography lies in an understanding of mammography itself.

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A mammogram is, like any x-ray, nothing more than a picture. But it is a picture in which the tiniest detail matters. To detect a break in, say, a thigh bone requires only an x-ray that can distinguish the bone in question from the surrounding muscle and tissue. But for a mammogram to be successful, it needs to create an image that distinguishes among blood vessels, glands, fatty tissue and breast tissue, all while allowing the radiologist to pick out a tumor that may appear on the film no larger than a grain of sand.

Radiologists generally agree that for much of mammography's thirty-year history, neither the x-ray machines themselves nor the techniques used in taking the pictures were up to this task. In the beginning, radiologists used the same x-ray machines for breasts as they did for chests and legs, crude machines with high levels of radiation. Even as late as the end of the 1970s, mammography was still a relatively unsubtle diagnostic technique. It could easily pick out incipient tumors in the relative translucent breasts of older women. Presented with the denser breast of a younger woman, however, it more often than not produced what looked like a badly overexposed negative.

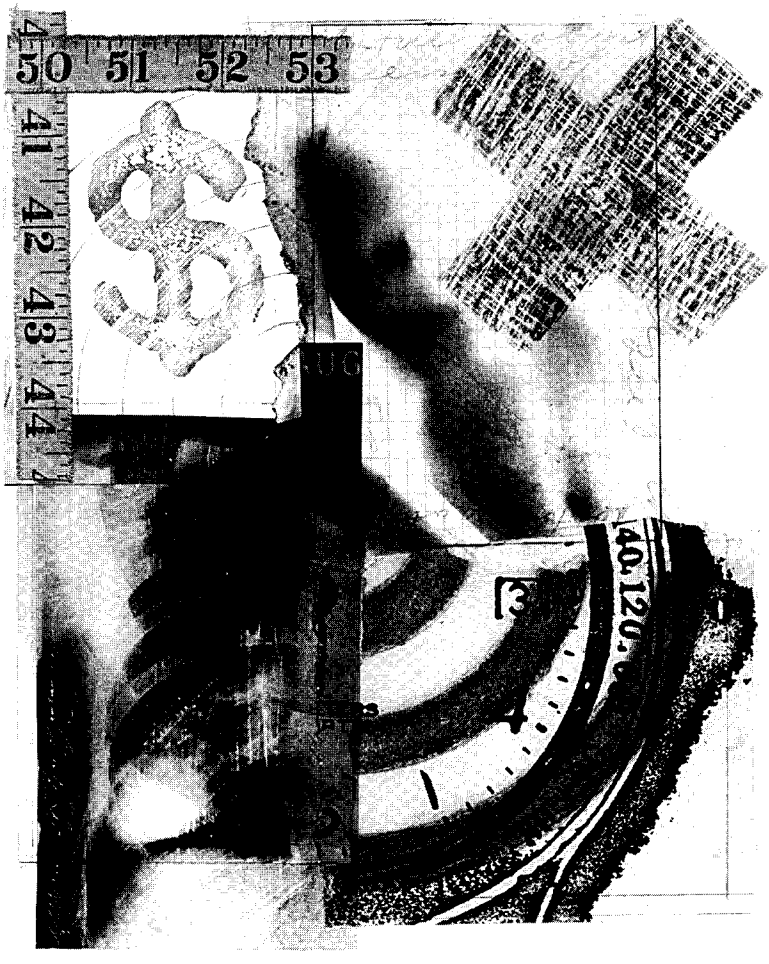

ILLUSTRATION BY TOM PRESTON FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

During the past fifteen years, however, mammography has undergone a transformation. Machines are now available with x-ray tubes specially designed to create a beam that can penetrate younger breasts. Lead grids are now placed between the breast and the photographic film to soak up radiation "scatter" and deliver a sharper picture. Photographic companies now have special films and processing chemicals that produce a higher contrast, more precise picture.

Radiologists have also recently discovered the answers to several imaging problems. How, for example, should the x-ray camera be positioned? Once it was thought the best results came from taking one picture of the breast from the side. Others thought it made more sense to take a side shot as well as a picture from the top of the breast looking down. Now research has shown that radiologists can find 10 percent more tumors by combining the top shot with what is called a medial lateral oblique view, where the camera is tilted down at the breast at a 45 degree angle.

Or consider a second problem: How often should a woman get a mammogram? In the beginning, radiologists experimented with intervals ranging from a year to two and one-half years. Now, thanks to recent research, the medical community has been able to devise the optimal interval. In women in their 50s, a mammogram can usually detect a tumor anywhere between 3.5 and 4.5 years before it becomes a palpable lump. If an older women gets a mammogram every year-and-a-half or every two years, in other words, the x-ray will probably catch most tumors well before they reach the dangerous stage. In women in their 40s, however, tumors appear to grow much faster, and a mammogram typically provides only an eighteen- to thirty-month early warning. In this group, anything other than an annual mammogram will give cancers a chance to grow and spread before they can be picked up.

These improvements have made a clear difference in the ability of radiologists to find tumors in younger women. Consider the results of a breast cancer screening program conducted in Holland, beginning in 1975. This was classic old-style mammography—one view only (first side, then medial lateral oblique), x-rays once every two years—and with older women it worked well. Generally, radiologists are happy if they can find a tumor before it exceeds ten millimeters in length, and in those women older than 50, almost half the tumors picked up by x-ray were smaller than that. Radiologists also are optimistic about a woman's survival if they can find a tumor while it is still in what is known as stage one—before it has spread. Seventy percent of the older women's tumors were caught at stage one.

Younger women were another story. Using the old

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mammography protocol, the Dutch were able to pick up just 19 percent of tumors while they were still under ten millimeters, and only 24 percent that were at stage one, a vastly inferior outcome.

Compare this to the results of two studies conducted over the past three years in San Francisco and British Columbia, both of which used state-of-the-art mammography, two pictures (top and medial lateral oblique) and annual x-rays. Following this protocol, both groups of researchers found no difference at all in the size and stage of tumors found in women under 50 and those over 50.

It should seem obvious, then, that it would make little sense to evaluate how well mammography works on younger women by using data from a time when mammography did not work well on younger women. Yet that is exactly what happened. Of the eight trials used by the National Cancer Institute to reach its revised assessment, one began in 1963, two began in 1976, one began in 1977 and three were started in the early 1980s. Two of the eight took one x-ray per examination. Many did not use the medial lateral oblique position. A majority did not use a lead grid. Two performed mammograms every eighteen months, a third did them every two years, a fourth offered mammography only every twenty-eight months and a fifth every thirty-three months.

Only the eighth and last of these studies—the Canadian trial—was conducted recently using the optimal two views with annual x-rays. But even here the mammography technology was so out-of-date and the training of the technicians so poor that almost half of the mammograms performed during the first four years of the study were later judged to be technically unsatisfactory by outside reviewers. In fact, two radiologists called in to oversee the quality of the program quit in disgust.

It is worth noting, that the experts who decided that mammography did not work in younger women were not, by and large, themselves expert in the use of mammography. They were statisticians, internists and research scientists, and the allegation has been made by radiologists who specialize in breast x-rays that these outside specialists simply did not appreciate fully the technology they were supposed to be evaluating. In the words of one radiologist, the outsiders thought a mammogram was something where "you put a nickel in and you got a Coke out."

There is a second, deeper problem with the NCI's decision, and that has to do with what statisticians refer to as the question of "power." Imagine, for example, that you wanted to find out whether a new kind of headache pill worked better than aspirin. If you gave it to 10,000 people, and for the sake of comparison gave aspirin to another 10,000 people, you could be reasonably sure that the study's results accurately reflected the merits of the two pills. The key is not just the number of people in the study but the sheer number of what are called "events": if, say, the average person averages one headache a month, then a one-year trial would result in your pill being compared to aspirin a whopping 120,000 times.

On the other hand, suppose you were interested only in your pill's effectiveness against a rare kind of migraine, which strikes only one person out of 5,000 every year. In this case, a trial of 10,000 people would provide only two events a year. Even if your pill beat aspirin hands down on both those occasions, you would have no way of knowing whether your pill was actually better or whether its superiority was simply the result of chance. As a general rule, the more events a study has, the greater its power to give an accurate answer.

This is the problem that has plagued researchers trying to gauge the effectiveness of mammography in younger women. In breast cancer trials, researchers follow two groups of women for a number of years, the first of whom are receiving regular mammograms and the second of whom are getting only clinical breast examinations. When there are significantly more events—in this case, deaths from breast cancer—in one group than the other, researchers can then conclude whether, and by how much, mammography works.

In older women, this is not as difficult. They get breast cancer two to three times more often than women under 50, and the disease tends to kill them more quickly. If you combine the result of a number of smaller tests, you can generate a powerful conclusion. But trying to evaluate mammography in women under 50 is a bit like trying to test the imaginary migraine pill. Because younger women get the disease less frequently and live so much longer when they do, most of the time there simply aren't enough events to reach a conclusion. If a study of younger women is going to have any power at all, it is going to have to be huge.

How huge? Harvard University radiologist Daniel Kopans and two colleagues recently calculated that for a study of younger women to accurately measure the same kind of benefit shown in older women it would have to have 480,000 women. But, if you add together all the women under 50 who have ever been part of a mammography trial, the total comes to less than 200,000. It simply hasn't been financially or logistically feasible for anyone to mount a trial of half a million women.

Here is the real explanation for the cancer institute's complaint that no study of younger women to date has shown a "statistically significant reduction in mortality." It does not mean that the benefits of mammography in younger women are too small to measure. It certainly does not mean that mammography doesn't work in younger women (although that is precisely what one senior Clinton administration health official, Devra Lee Davis, claimed in a bizarre editorial in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* earlier

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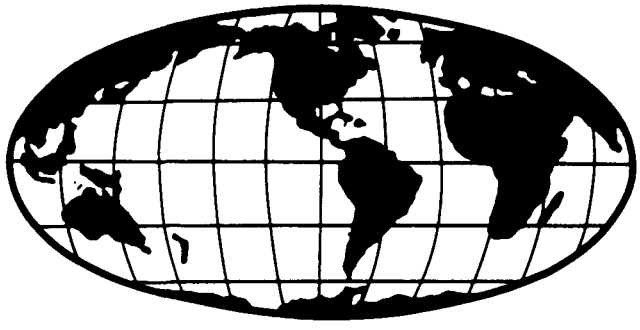

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this year.) It simply means that no study of younger women has been powerful enough to show a "statistically significant reduction in mortality."

It is perfectly possible, in other words, that women in their 40s could benefit from mammography just as much as older women could. It is even possible that mammography could save more lives in younger women than in older women. But until more studies have been completed, the question is unanswerable.

The scientists and doctors at the National Cancer Institute were faced with a judgment call. They could take the conservative route and recommend x-rays only when they had the definitive evidence. Or, mindful of the tens of thousands of lives at stake, they could give the technique the benefit of the doubt and go ahead with mammography until the final answers could be found.

The evidence before them contained powerful reasons to take the latter course. Mammography had improved immeasurably since the time the original clinical evidence had been collected. Tumors could now be found just as easily in older women as in younger women, a highly suggestive if not conclusive sign of mammography's equivalence in younger women. There was a recommendation already in place that was easily understood and widely followed. But in the end they turned their backs on it all.

"There are really two philosophical positions here, and it all depends on where you sit," said NCI scientist Arnold Kalunzy at the last of the institute's public meetings before it reissued the guidelines. "The one position is that the intervention or screening is effective until proven ineffective and the other being that the intervention is ineffective until proven effective. I think the general consensus of our group was in the latter camp."

This is medicine at its most conservative, and it represents a departure, at least from the way medical policy has been made in this country over the past several decades. It is instructive to compare the NCI's decision on mammography to the way the National Institutes of Health issued advice about cholesterol in 1988. Then, the NIH's National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP) urged that all adults older than 20 have their cholesterol measured, and recommended that those whose cholesterol was above 200 milligrams per deciliter modify their diets or take some medication. These were expensive recommendations, and there was then—and remains—no clear scientific rationale behind them. Lowering cholesterol has been shown to reduce the risk of heart attacks. But it hasn't brought about a "statistically significant reduction in mortality," since the decline in heart attack deaths among those with lower cholesterol is offset by a higher rate of mortality from things like cancer.

Nevertheless, the NCEP made these recommendations anyway, because heart disease is at epidemic levels in the United States, because they were sure that at some future time studies would bear out their hunch about cholesterol and because they felt in the interim that they should give patients the benefit of the doubt.

In the same period, the NCI fought for the approval of two drugs for AIDS, AZT and DDI, even though there was not much data available to support their effectiveness. There is a wise and honorable tradition in American medicine of taking intelligent chances on behalf of the very sick, especially when no other treatments are available. AIDS certainly fits into that category. Breast cancer does as well.

But we are now in a period during which medicine has been chastised repeatedly for its extravagance and heroics are reserved not for spending money but for saving it. In the aftermath of the NCI decision, director Broder allowed that he might well recommend a mammogram for a woman in her 40s if she were his patient, but he couldn't do that if he were making policy for all women.

"From an ethical point of view, we need to make a clear distinction between what we recommend on a public health basis and what is between the doctor and patient," said Barbara Rimer, a member of the NCI's mammography panel, at one of the institute's public meetings. "For public health advice we need to have a great deal of certainty."

Henceforth, heroics would be private, not public. There would be two tiers of care—the top tier driven by the advice of doctor to patient, the bottom tier driven by cost-conscious national policy. In the months after the NCI decision, this distinction would be emphasized again and again. One senior Clinton administration official was quoted as saying, disapprovingly, that the cost of providing every American woman in her 40s with a mammogram would run at least $2 billion per year. In the original Clinton health reform proposal, the benefits package pointedly contained no coverage at all for mammograms before the age of 50.

Mammography was a test case, David Eddy, a professor of health policy at Duke University and a member of the Clinton health care team, told *The New York Times*. "If we yield every time there's a constituency that can make an emotional argument for coverage of something that is not supported by actual evidence," he said, "then we will have a chaotic, expensive and inefficient health care system in this country."

There are times and places, obviously, when this kind of strict accounting for health care providers is necessary and inevitable. What is unsettling, however, is how indiscriminate the new accounting has been in its choice of target. What is also unsettling is the behavior of the scientists themselves. While there is no evidence that the NCI was directly pressured by the Clinton administration to change its mind on mammography, it seems obvious it was cowed by the spirit of the times into making a narrow and ungenerous reading of the evidence. Medical science, in the end, lost its nerve. This is not a comforting picture, not in the face of an enemy as implacable as breast cancer. •

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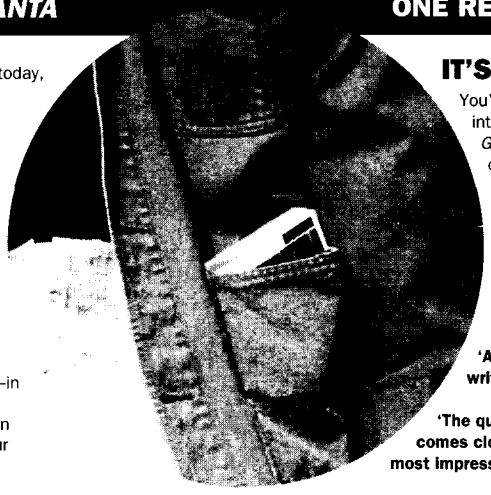

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Sadnesses

What America does not need is another instance of the way that our film world chews up talent, especially acting talent. But the troublesome news is that Meryl Streep is giving us another such instance.

About her talent there has been so little doubt that, almost from the moment she became visible, a chief concern was whether our theater-film world would allow her to fulfill herself. When I saw her some twenty years ago in productions at the Yale School of Drama, I was struck, as were others, by her gifts; and I worried, as did others, about her chances for fulfillment.

At first—a long first, in fact—our worries seemed foolish. Streep, invited by Joseph Papp, came down to New York after Yale and began to play interesting parts successfully. Films soon called her, of course. Her film debut was in *Julia* (1977), and obviously they hadn't yet learned how to photograph her. That problem was solved in *The Deer Hunter*; her film career took off.

During her early Hollywood years Streep made a point of returning occasionally to the theater, not as penance for the movie money she was making (which those returns seem for some film stars) but apparently because she wanted to keep exercising theater skills and because she wanted parts that films couldn't provide. In the summer of 1978, while she was shooting *Kramer vs. Kramer* and *Manhattan* in New York, she was also playing Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew* for Joe Papp at night. (Ten years or so later, when Papp knew his health was going, Streep was his first choice to take his place. She declined because she knew her job was to act.)

Then her returns to the theater dwindled and disappeared. This was understandable, even (to put it presumptuously) forgivable, because she was offered so many good film roles—in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *Sophie's Choice*, *Silkwood*, *Out of Africa*, *Plenty* and *Ironweed*. But even in those fruitful years, there were some curious lapses, such as *Still of the Night* and *Falling in Love*, which seemed attempts to "normalize" her as a movie star. Then, as it became clear that her talent and her Oscars were not translating into the box office, she began to grab more patently for popularity, in *She-Devil*, *Postcards from the Edge*, *Defending Your Life*, none of which did much for her in any way.

Now, after a considerable absence, she returns in **The River Wild** (Universal), in which the greatest demands on her are for strenuous paddling while white-water rafting. A stale product of Movieland mechanics, diluted from Griffith's *Way Down East* and John Boorman's *Deliverance*, this picture is just one more reason to worry about an outstanding talent.

Along with this unworthy film come interviews telling us that Streep is now 45, a difficult age for female film stars, that she is trapped by her age and her need to boom at the box office, that her career is in danger. But who made this trap? The answer, I suggest, is Streep. Not because of her ill-judged grabs at commercial success, not because (though this must be painfully true) good material is hard to find, but because for the last fifteen years or so she has defined the fulfillment of her talent solely by films.

Here is a dream—sparked perhaps by the fact that Joe Papp made her that offer. I dream that Streep attaches herself—which she could do virtually at will—to one of the pre-eminent resident theaters in this country and at that theater does some of the roles in great plays that impatiently await her. Or, dreaming right along, I see her forming a company of her own, possibly with another wasting talent, Robert Duvall, and doing some seasons of great plays, in one place or on tour. I dream, in short, that she refuses to let Hollywood dictate what an acting career is. (Wryly enough, such a move might well improve her Hollywood prospects.)

Is this dream really so wild? In Britain and Germany and Sweden, to name only three countries, film careers don't straiten acting talent. Think of the film-plus-theater careers of Olivier and Albert Finney and Glenda Jackson, of Bruno Ganz and Edith Clever and Jutta Lampe, or Max von Sydow and Bibi Andersson. The pat objection to the examples of such people is that they live in markedly different theater-film cultures. Certainly. But if someone with Streep's power and gifts doesn't

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move to alter our compartmentalized film world, our disregard for the nurture of talents instead of careers, who will do it?

From this hopeful dream, I awake—to learn that Streep is to do the female lead in the film of *The Bridges of Madison County*. Hope deferred maketh even a critic's heart sick.... Still, good luck to her.

Another career, a director's, sadly has ended and has ended sadly. Tony Richardson died in 1991, leaving behind an unreleased film, **Blue Sky**. In September the Film Society of Lincoln Center arranged a Richardson retrospective that was capped with *Blue Sky* (now released by Orion).

I had seen almost all the Richardson films, but I went to see one again, *The Charge of the Light Brigade* (1968), and also one I had missed, *Hamlet* (1969). *Light Brigade* has a dubious structure—a long initial drama about Victorian society doesn't quite lead to the climactic battle sequences—but its dialogue is exquisite. (By Charles Wood. He later wrote a play called *Veterans* and denied that it was about the making of this film, though it's about the shooting of a historical epic in Turkey, where the *Light Brigade* battle scenes were shot, and though John Gielgud, who was in the film, was also in the play.) That first two-thirds is the best Richardson work I know, strong yet graceful.

Hamlet is a film of Richardson's theater production at the Roundhouse in London, a converted railroad building, with Nicol Williamson as the prince. (It later moved to Broadway.) The film flows smoothly and never obtrudes as a low-budget job. Williamson is an eccentric actor who is hard to disregard even when he is blatantly wrong-headed. But some of his performance is admirable; e.g., in his opening scene, his light mocking tone helps to compensate for Hamlet's somewhat sticky self-dramatization. ("I have that within which passeth show," etc.) And Anthony Hopkins is Claudius, not yet the Hopkins he became but on his way.

By and large, Richardson's film career was a mix of earnest but heavy-handed, socially conscious work (*Look Back in Anger, The Entertainer*) and artiness (*The Sailor from Gibraltar, Mademoiselle*). *Tom Jones* and *Joseph Andrews* were anomalies—and the smash success of the former still puzzles me. But whatever one's opinion of Richardson, it's rotten luck that his last film should have been *Blue Sky*.

His directing here is completely without distinction, even without the flaws of earlier work; the script provided few chances for either flaws or virtues. The screenplay, the work of three writers, is ludicrous. A U.S. Army major has a wife who is an exhibitionist, almost nymphomaniacal. Her cavortings embarrass his career and their two teenage daughters. As portrayed, this woman, anywhere but in the movies, long ago would have been under treatment, perhaps institutionalized. So it's hard to take the problems of the picture seriously, though Tommy Lee Jones and Jessica Lange do their utmost with their roles.

In any case, Richardson ended up a long way from the Angry Young Men and from continental artiness, too. *Blue Sky* is only failed mediocrity. Apparently Richardson had met difficulties in getting worthwhile pictures in Hollywood, and apparently he, too, had reduced the prospects for his career to what he could come up with out there. •

Money and the intellectual.

A Busload of Prophets

By Adam Zagajewski

> It is certainly not the mission of the mind to defend the world dominance of money. Hardly any system was so detrimental to the basic human values as that of capitalism.
> —Erich Kahler

What is this world—the world of politics, of "modern civilization," of great capital cities, Washington, London, Paris, the world of contemporary economics, television, large newspapers, of the Parliament and the Pentagon—what is this world in the eyes of a poet? To be sure, this mighty world cares precious little about the opinions of poets. It can do very well without them. But poets also seem to attach little importance to the forms of today's civilization, except, perhaps, for sporadic out-

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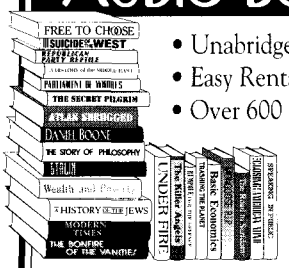

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bursts of moralist outrage caused by a war, or some other vagary of the powers. Poets usually treat the world of real politics with scorn, and the world of real politics would scorn poets, if it knew of their existence.

A conservative thinker predicted that twentieth-century culture inevitably would break up into small "provinces." It would be fragmented and deprived of an integrated vision of reality. Indeed, that is what has happened: poets, composers, painters all live within self-contained and self-satisfied professional enclaves, and scramble for recognition almost exclusively within their own sects. In many respects members of such artistic clans differ very little from, say, an association of stamp collectors. In the past, to be a poet was to defend a certain vision of the world, to be a prophet (though not necessarily in the biblical manner), to struggle for an ideal of civilization and not for some narrow political premise. Even the nineteenth century resembled a bus crowded with prophets—sometimes angry and sometimes happy, sometimes depressed and sometimes howling in rage. Do we have to recall their names? Blake, Dostoyevski, Flaubert, Tolstoy, Mickiewicz, Norwid. In our century, the bus has shrunk, not aesthetically but philosophically. What is missing is the fervent advocacy of a certain image of the world.

This shrinkage was often the contribution of great poets and prose writers. Thomas Mann, for example, a man capable of telling the most captivating stories, developed the art of irony. His irony consisted in the interplay of two opposite ideas—rationalism and irrationalism, or the Enlightenment and the Dark Ages—whose sheer juxtaposition was supposed to dazzle us with the depth of the chasm separating the one from the other, and leave us there. In a paradoxically similar spirit, Mann's ideological opposite, the exquisite Vladimir Nabokov, encouraged his colleagues, with typically Russian persistence, to rid themselves of any thought that was not related to literature.

It is easy to notice that the bus of prophets in the nineteenth century carried prophets of almost exclusively conservative leanings. For the new and confident world of liberal capitalism discouraged candidates for prophecy. It did not persecute them, but it deprived them of faith in their own powers. Not that the old race of prophets died out entirely. Lionel Trilling, in his wonderful book *The Liberal Imagination*, reminded us that writers of conservative political views were still dominant among the modernists. Trilling's book itself was a fine illustration of the basic dilemma of spiritual creativity in our times—the meeting of the conservative imagination ("every powerful imagination is conservative," said Hofmannsthal) with the liberal capitalist model of society.

Powerful imaginations naturally will seek a critical, polemical engagement with the society of mass consumption. This seems like a pretty uncontroversial proposition. And yet an unexpected and interesting light is cast upon this proposition by the recent transformations of the civilization of Eastern Europe. And this connection between the general problem of artistic imagination in the epoch of liberal capitalism and the East European situation can be observed also in the subjective domain.

Until the age of 36, I lived in Poland. I was the subject of a totalitarian system that was governed neither by spirit nor by money, but simply by the secret police. Soviet-style totalitarianism, especially in its period of decline, existed only through inertia. In my country, totalitarianism was a colonial inertia, an order imposed by Moscow rather than Warsaw. This political system was dead, incapable of any evolution, fulfilling itself only in various restrictions, prohibitions and regulations. It was totally uncreative, completely hostile to material and spiritual culture. Even if it was possible, after 1956, to "get by" in my country, since Stalinism had been replaced with a rather passive version of Khrushchevism, life was still marked by a lack of confidence in the future, a lack of social energy, a general apathy. One lived more against the system than within the system. One lived in contempt of a system that killed every hope. Even in the second half of the '70s, when the system tolerated a sort of political opposition, it was lifeless, closed, provincial.

These matters are rather well-known, and I mention them only in order to point out a certain property of Soviet totalitarianism: it created a civilization so wretched that the world of the liberal-capitalist civilization—the world that provoked animosity and antagonism among the European aristocracy of the spirit—appeared almost perfect when regarded from inside the totalitarian domain. Western democracy seemed perfectly beautiful. There was no tyranny, no secret police, no censorship, no flimsiness of architecture and of everyday objects.

The Communist lens made the Western world seem like the world in a

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novel, like the human comedy of Balzac. We did not idealize this Western civilization too much: we saw its swindlers and its liars, its venal politicians and its greedy merchants, we were aware of the boredom of long Sundays and the boredom of overrefined artists, the aggressiveness of journalists, the dullness of country parish priests, the stupidity of movie stars. We saw it all, and yet we admired that imperfect world, because the human comedy is a deeply touching thing. One cannot, probably, improve upon it. One can only terrorize it or freeze it. This is what totalitarianism does, when it calls the human comedy a "society of capitalist exploitation," a "decadent product of late capitalism," a "Jewish-Masonic conspiracy."

We also saw—the plural pronoun refers to my friends and acquaintances—that a certain kind of quiet heroism was needed to sustain a free society. We understood that this colorful, infinitely diverse carnival of human life could exist only through the concerted effort of thousands of people. Some of them, of course, could appear rather comic in their daily endeavors. Is it possible not to smile at the labors of office clerks, bureaucrats, customs officers? But it is possible to smile at something even as you defend it against destruction.

We also understood—though it took us some time to acquire this knowledge—that economics is one of the primary motivations of a free society. The phantom of prosperity moves people to action just as a mechanical hare excites dogs to their chase. The Western societies know not only phantasmagoric opulence, but also real wealth; and although it is in vogue to sneer at millionaires, it is also true that poor societies are an easier prey to dictators. In general, wealth favors civilization.

The democratic countries had created a certain way of life that was entirely real, that furnished an answer to some deep, if hard to define, needs of human nature. And this way of life was fragile. It was fragile because the human comedy is never defended by a powerful ideology. For the human comedy is the perfect antithesis of utopia. Neither Plato, nor Kierkegaard, nor Marx would spring to its defense. Only moderate thinkers such as de Tocqueville would show it some understanding. The world of the human comedy is fragile, not least because within its domain a quiet, everyday heroism has replaced the more classical kind of heroism typical of militaristic-aristocratic societies.

I am a poet, and so I should be inclined to adopt a rather aristocratic perspective and to pay homage to artistic and religious imagination rather than to the rules of the free market. And yet I resist the inclination, since I find it difficult to forget, and to renounce, my totalitarian experience. I have no intention of repudiating my old affinity for the messy human comedy. And so, without meaning to offend the memory of a great scholar, I reject Erich Kahler's thesis. The motto by Kahler with which I began, and especially its first part—"It is certainly not the mission of the mind to defend the world dominance of money"—would sound quite convincing to me were it not for my own political experiences. It *is* the mission of the human mind to defend money and the market economy, though it is hardly the human mind's uncritical mission, or its only one.

—translated by Jaroslaw Anders

ADAM ZAGAJEWSKI is the author most recently of *Canvas* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). His collection of essays, *Two Cities: On Exile, History, and the Imagination*, will be published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux in February.

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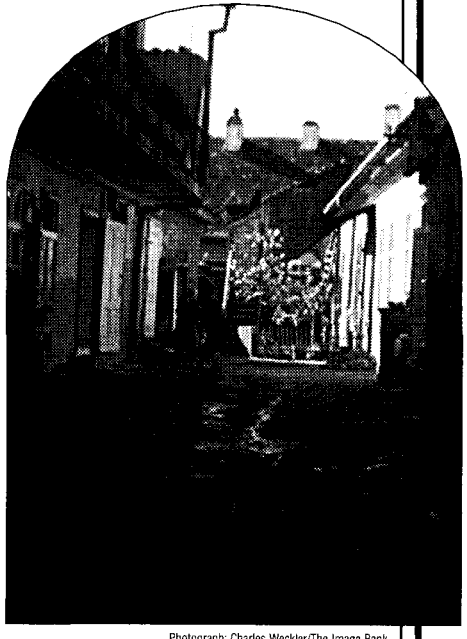

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The Beat of History

By Caryl Phillips

None to Accompany Me by Nadine Gordimer

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 324 pp., $22)

This is Nadine Gordimer's first book since the changes in South Africa, and one is left with the feeling that history finally may have overtaken her swift and often perceptive pen. Change is occurring at breakneck speed, and in her struggle to keep pace Gordimer has produced a broken-backed novel that has the feel of two books. Both of the books in *None to Accompany Me* are interesting in themselves, but they do not sit well together.

One is an analysis of the "new" South Africa, with special attention paid to the return to their homeland of a particular black family, but with the focus fixed on continued violence, and perhaps intractable sociopolitical difficulties. The other is a study of Vera Stark, a white South African lawyer in her 60s, who is "a fixture at the Legal Foundation," an organization that "came into existence in response to the plight of black communities." As her country moves uneasily from white minority to black majority rule, Vera finds herself faced with the physical evidence of her past in the form of her son Ivan and her grandson Adam, both returned from England. At this time of great political and familial change, Gordimer's heroine casts her mind back across an unsatisfactory emotional life, which has included husbands, lovers and many betrayals of one form or another.

The difficulty, perhaps the impossibility, of living a normal life in a racially divided country, and the problem of how one copes with the indignities and the contradictions of a government-sponsored system of oppression, are concerns that always have been near the heart of Gordimer's fiction. She has explored these iniquities from both sides of the fence, and occasionally, as in *My Son's Story* (1990), she even has adopted a third perspective, that of a "coloured" South African. Her desire to face up to social responsibility as a writer has been explored in her many essays, the most important of which were collected in 1988 in *The Essential Gesture*, in which she revealed her personal repugnance toward the system of apartheid.

But the essays also went further, in their attempts to formulate means by which a writer working in such a sociopolitical climate might balance his or her primary responsibility as an artist with the moral obligation to speak out against perceived injustice. In the title essay, "The Essential Gesture," one senses an indignant Gordimer, fatigued by the burden of synthesizing her artistic vision with her political beliefs, and impatient with the carping of the cultural commissars of the West:

> When interviewed abroad, there is often disappointment that you are there, and not in jail in your own country. And since you are not—why are you not? Aha ... does this mean that you have not written the book you should have written? Can you imagine this kind of self-righteous inquisition being directed against a John Updike for not having made the trauma of America's Vietnam war the theme of his work?

In a footnote to this statement, Gordimer concedes that Western societies "do not demand this 'orthodoxy' of their writers because (arguably) their values are not in a crisis of survival constructed on a single moral issue." This is almost certainly the case; but her concession by no means weakens the fundamental truth at the heart of her original statement. She proceeds to quote Camus, who once said that "it is from the moment when I shall no longer be more than a writer that I shall cease to write."

Writers such as Gordimer, and countless others like her, of different national, ethnic and political backgrounds, always have had no choice but to be "more than a writer." Gordimer is not only acutely aware of the problems involved in being "more than a writer," she is also alert to the manner in which others, in South Africa and elsewhere, view a white female who chooses to willfully abandon fealty to race in her public life and in the narrative strategies that she employs.

Nadine Gordimer was born in 1923 in Springs, a small gold-mining town in the Transvaal. In an autobiographical essay called "A Bolter and the Invincible Summer" (1963), she recalled the state of torpor in which she existed in this somnolent part of South Africa:

> I played golf, learnt to drink gin with the RAF pupil pilots from the nearby air station, and took part in amateur theatricals to show recognisable signs of life to the people around me. I even went to first aid and nursing classes because this was suggested as an "interest" for me: it did not matter to me what I did, since I could not admit that there was nothing, in the occupations and diversions offered to me, that really did interest me, and I was not sure—the only evidence was in books—that anything else was possible.

Eventually Gordimer entered the world of books and started to write. She wrote her first short story at the age of 15, and it was published in a liberal South African weekly called *Forum*. Twelve years later she published her first collection of fiction, *The Soft Voice of the Serpent* (1951), and for the forty years thereafter she has published a steady stream of short story collections and novels. *None to Accompany Me* is her twenty-third book.

Gordimer emerged as a literary voice in the 1950s, at the same time as Dennis Brutus, Lewis Nkosi, Es'kia Mphahlele, Bessie Head, and other South African writers who were using the English language as a literary medium, were being forced into exile, or jail, or both. Gordimer managed to stay out of jail and avoid exile, in part because she was not black, in part because she did not employ the political rhetoric of her contemporaries, in part because she was blessed with some luck. While this politically driven diaspora weakened the heart of English-language writing in the 1950s and '60s, Afrikaans writing was becoming both stronger and more adventurous. In both form and subject matter, writers such as Etienne Leroux, Breyten Breytenbach and André Brink were consistently breaking taboos and conventions in their work, with reference to religion, morality, sex and the narrative tradition. These *sestigers*, as they came to be known, flourished. It fell to English-speaking writers such as Gordimer to keep pace with their Afrikaner countrymen; and although her literary community was being depleted constantly, Gordimer rose to the task with discipline and dedication.

In the forty years that she has been writing and publishing, Gordimer's output has been divided evenly between the short story and the novel. Many critics have pointed out what they perceive to be her superior work in the short story, and to some extent this would seem to

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be the case. Gordimer has spoken about the difference between these two forms, not in terms of personal preference, but with reference to the structural and technical distinctions that, to her mind, mark out one form as separate from the other:

> But for me certainly there is a clue, there, to the choice of the short story by writers, as a form: whether or not it has a narrative in the external or internal sense, whether it sprawls or neatly bites its own tail, a short story is a concept that the writer can "hold," fully realized, in his imagination, at one time. A novel is, by comparison, staked out, and must be taken possession of stage by stage; it is impossible to contain, all at once, the proliferation of concepts it ultimately may use.... A short story occurs, in the imaginative sense. To write one is to express from a situation in the exterior or interior world the life-giving drop—sweat, tear, semen, saliva—that will speed an intensity on the page; burn a hole in it.

Gordimer's short stories concern themselves with the various forms of repression, self-deception and humiliation, themes that occur naturally in the sociopolitical environment of South Africa, but that are at their most potent when they emerge out of a concern with the individual. In "Rain Queen" (1972), an anguished young woman remembers her first lover and her unfulfilled dreams of happiness with him. The harsh predictability of his present-day life with his wife, Eleanora, appears to be his punishment for having failed to commit to her. But her own life, and her sense of her own worth, have been damaged permanently:

> Poor Marco, sitting in Milan or Genoa at Sunday lunch, toothpick in his fingers, Eleanora's children crawling about, Eleanora's brothers and sisters and uncles and aunts around him. But I have never woken up from that dream. In the seven years I've been married I've had—how many lovers? A lot if you count the very brief holiday episodes as well.

Gordimer is least successful, in the short story and the novel, when she attempts to comment directly on the South African situation, creating characters, black or white, who are forever in danger of becoming little more than vessels to convey their creator's thoughts and observations. *None to Accompany Me* becomes problematic at precisely those moments when it attempts to describe the events that are taking place in a changing South Africa, and departs from the revelatory nuances of Vera Stark's interior life. We are only two pages into the novel when we are presented with the image of Nelson Mandela outside his old Soweto cottage, with schoolchildren "queuing to embrace him, while foreign diplomats presented themselves to be filmed clasping his hand."

This "snapshot" occurs as Gordimer is trying to introduce us to the marital landscape of Vera's life, a landscape that is central to any understanding of her as a character. The Mandela reference catches our eye, albeit momentarily, yet it takes our attention away from Vera, and in an entirely different direction. A few pages later, when Vera speaks of her husband, our attention is once more seized by sociocultural "information." He is introduced as an ex-university teacher, and departs as a "failed sculptor," but in between we learn nothing of him, the man:

> If Bennet had stayed on as Our Male Lead at the university, he would have been teaching a curriculum devised for the level of general education and Western cultural background of white students, difficult to attain for the black students who satisfied entrance standards nominally but came from township schools where boycotts were their history thesis, running battles with the police their epic poetry, and economic theory that of a home where there wasn't enough money for bus fare, let alone books. So what was the difference, whichever way a failed sculptor might make a living?

Throughout the novel, the demands

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of fiction become submerged beneath the author's desire to act as reporter from the frontline of change. It is frustrating enough to be unable to focus clearly on character because of these interventions, but it is a much more serious problem when we feel that consistency of characterization is being sacrificed to a political point. Vera remembers her former lover Otto, a German who works for an Austrian television network, a man whom she imagines to be a Jew whose parents were killed in the camps. Having listened to Otto voicing his growing horror at the daily violence being directed by the police toward young black schoolchildren, Vera comments, "You haven't lived here long enough to know. The Nazis didn't end in the war where your parents died, they were reborn here." Such a statement makes Vera appear at best insensitive and at worst stupid, for the analogy is crude. In fact, the Vera we have encountered so far, and the Vera we get to know, is neither insensitive nor stupid, which leaves us wondering why a writer would make such a clumsy point knowing full well that its banality rocks the fictional construct to its foundations.

Gordimer's desire to keep abreast of changes in South African society has damaged her writing in the past, even in her short stories. In "Africa Emergent" (1975), a story that is strong in characterization and politically astute, the writing occasionally descends to reportage. The last lines of the story have a resonance clearly intended as ironic commentary on the hypocrisies to which the system introduces people, but the lines lack the subtlety and the insight that the piece has possessed up until then. They are a graceless and clumsy conclusion to an otherwise fine story: "And so we white friends can purge ourselves of the shame of rumours. We can be pure again. We are satisfied at last. He's in prison. He's proved himself, hasn't he?"

In "Living in the Interregnum," an essay published in 1982, Gordimer asserted, "I remain a writer, not a public speaker: nothing I say here will be as true as my fiction." Precisely. It is only when, as a writer of fiction, she adopts the voice of a public speaker that her tone becomes false. *None to Accompany Me* works best when it deals with the kind of life that politically active black South Africans, who were exiled during the later stages of white rule, have to face when returning to their country. Didymus, his wife Sibongile and their daughter Mpho, all recent returnees, have to come to terms rapidly with both personal and political change.

This family's responses to the "new" South Africa seem urgent and important because, unlike Vera and her family, they have been denied so vigorously the luxury of choice. For them, questions of independence and self-determination are not abstract ideas to be juggled like husbands and lovers. The reality of enforced exile, and perpetual vigilance in the face of physical danger, has shaped their lives, and continues to impinge upon them. Their homecoming, after years of sacrifice, can in no way be described as triumphant. When faced with the grim realities of their vermin-infested temporary accommodation, Sibongile's patience breaks:

> —*Accommodation.* How long can we be expected to carry on in this filthy dump, this whore-house for Hillbrow drunks, this wonderful concession to desegregation, what an honour to sleep under the white man's spunk.—
> —What about all the others living here . . . it's no better for them.—He was confronting her with herself, as she was every time she entered the foyer of the hotel or walked through the room smelling of cockroach repellent that was the restaurant, embracing unknown women, men and children in the intimacy of shared exile and return.

When Vera's son Ivan returns home to the "new" South Africa, his observations and the difficulties of his adjustment, though no doubt important to him, appear emotionally flaccid when set against those of Sibongile and her family. We register the minutiae of social change as seen by Ivan, but there is little narrative verve to his story, nor is there any real insight into his predicament:

> The waiter arrived with plates ranged along his arm. Another hovered with the censer of a giant pepper-mill. The wine was uncorked, Ivan lifted his glass and mouthed a kiss blown to his mother across the table;—Where are the Indian waiters there used to be when I was a kid? They're all African now.—
> —Moved up a rung on the ladder. They've taken the place of whites who used to serve in shops—men's outfitters and so on. You're like an old man, reminiscing! That's what happens when you exile yourself.—

Gordimer's new novel comments freely on the lives of both black and white South Africans, their lives apart and their lives together. Indeed, she always has been combative in defense of her right to comment on black lives, as she made clear in "The Essential Gesture":

> White writers who are "only writers" are open to related reproach for "stealing the lives of blacks" as good material. Their claim to this material is the same as the black writers' at an important existential remove nobody could discount. Their essential gesture can be fulfilled only in the integrity Chekhov demanded: "to describe a situation so truthfully . . . that the reader can no longer evade it."

In *None to Accompany Me,* far from "stealing the lives of blacks"—something of which Gordimer never has been guilty—she tries to show us how the lives of black people have been changed by transformations in South Africa, and in this she is largely successful. Still, even here, Gordimer has a tendency to overstate her case, and we all too often find her drifting aimlessly in the shallow pool of cultural speculation. Rather than describe Mpho as she might any young girl, Gordimer becomes carried away with ethnocentric imagery that is irksome, and more perniciously suggests a racial obsessiveness that does not appear to preoccupy young Mpho:

> This schoolgirl combined the style of *Vogue* with the assertion of Africa. She was a mutation achieving happy appropriation of the aesthetics of opposing species. She exposed the exaggeratedly long legs that seem to have been created not by natural endowment but to the specification of Western standards of luxury, along with the elongated chassis of custom-built cars. The oyster-shell-pink palms of her slender hands completed the striking colour contrast of matt black skin with purple-red fingernails. Her hair, drawn back straightened and oiled to the gloss of European hair, was gathered on the crown and twisted into stiff dreadlocks, Congolese style, that fringed her shoulders.

Toward the end of the novel, the worlds of Vera and Didymus and Sibongile come together. Mpho becomes involved with Oupa, a young black colleague of Vera's who has served time on Robben Island. Oupa subsequently is killed in an ambush that Vera survives. The bullet passes through her. When Ivan's son Adam—Vera's grandson—comes to South Africa from England, much to Vera's consternation he begins to show an interest in Mpho. Vera's objections are not racially motivated, it is simply that she feels that such a liaison might undermine her relationship with Mpho's parents. When the novel throws off its shackles of adherence to temporal commentary, and concentrates on family, with all the concomitant individual hurts, grievances and confusion, it is at its strongest. There is, in the final pages, a wonderfully ironic twist to Vera's life when her lesbian daughter adopts a black child. Despite all her years of political activism, Vera suddenly finds herself a part of the black community in a more intimate fashion than she ever could have imagined.

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In 1974 Gordimer responded testily when asked by a journalist if she was a liberal. "I am a white South African radical. Please don't call me a liberal." Now, in her autumn years, her attachment to the word "radical" has atrophied; and she may be more of a liberal than she thinks. In the context of present-day South Africa, certainly, there is nothing radical about the political or literary mind that produced *None to Accompany Me.* For extended stretches of this novel, one longs for Gordimer to find some other, more oblique way to be political, in the way that J. M. Coetzee has done, for all too often her narrative capitulates to the lure of rhetoric, and the fuller humanity of her characters is obscured as the prose scampers to the superficial beat of history. One hopes that in the "new" South Africa, we will witness the emergence of a generation of writers who might be willing, despite continued troubles, to allow their prose to march to the beat of the human heart.

CARYL PHILLIPS is the author most recently of *Crossing the River* (Knopf).

Taking Credit

BY JAMES GRANT

A Piece of the Action: How the Middle Class Joined the Money Class by Joseph Nocera

(Simon & Schuster, 464 pp., $25)

Bill Clinton, the man who fell in love with the bond market—who solicitously asked if it would still be able to function after the World Trade Center was bombed in 1993—may go down in history not as the Health Care President but as the Mutual Fund President. His term of office has coincided with the greatest outpouring of public investment dollars into mutual funds, bond and stock funds alike, on record.

The stock market is the new American cornucopia. It has rallied since 1982 through thick and thin: Republican and Democratic administrations, lower and higher tax rates, falling and rising interest rates. It actually showed a small net gain in 1987, the year of the crash. "I would like you to make them prolific," Clemenceau said to Bernard M. Baruch as he sent the American spectator-statesman some of his dollars to invest in the 1920s. Millions of ordinary people in the past dozen years have found their own Baruch in the person of Peter Lynch, the fabled portfolio manager of the Magellan Fund, or (since Lynch's retirement in 1990) one of the scores of pretenders to the mantle of the Next Peter Lynch.

Of all the hundreds of billions of dollars that Americans have entrusted to mutual funds since 1960, fully 73 percent has been invested in the past three years. Wall Street, which makes its living by underwriting and distributing stocks and bonds, is understandably loathe to put its customers into Treasury bills, certificates of deposit or the other savings instruments that generate so few commissions and fees. "Cash is trash," the brokers' mantra, lately has been taken to heart by the public, too: in 1992 the assets lodged in open-end bond and income mutual funds exceeded the assets in money-market mutual funds for the first time since the ripening of the money-fund boom of the late 1970s. As every schoolchild knows—indeed, there are mutual funds for children—money-market funds invest in the aforementioned "trash": e.g., Treasury bills and commercial paper. As bond funds buy longer-dated debt securities, they usually yield more than money funds do but at the cost of greater risk. Equity funds own shares of businesses.

But all this has been explained already. In 1993, no fewer than 2,708 articles about mutual funds were published in some 800 American magazines, an editorial emission representing 31 percent of all the articles on mutual funds published in the same sample of periodicals over the prior twenty-two years. On the evidence, most of the stories were bullish, as stock mutual-fund assets in 1993 climbed by $226 billion, or 43 percent. Only a little less stupendously, assets of bond and income mutual funds leapt by $184 billion, or 32 percent.

As for 1994, assets in stock mutual funds have surpassed those in bond and income mutual funds for the first time in

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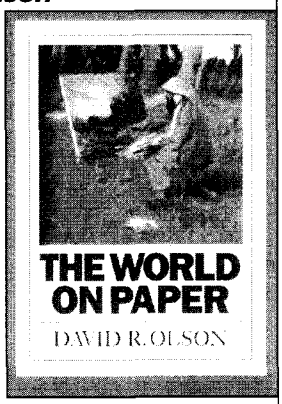
David R. Olson



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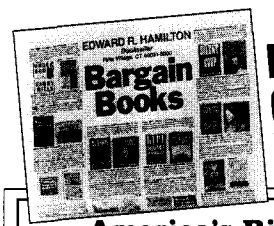

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a decade. Here is a milestone of faith. Bonds ultimately mature, but common stocks are perpetual; the return of a stockholder's money depends, in some part, on the future good opinions of others. Whereas, a few years ago, people had yield on their minds, today they are reaching for capital gains. Investing in so-called aggressive growth funds with dividend yields of less than 1 percent, they are passing up more than 6 percent on short-dated Treasury securities. It is the kind of bargain made by people who think they know that the stock market always goes up.

Frequently in the past, Main Street and Wall Street have had their differences, but today as never before they are joined at the hip. It is a golden age of commissions and approbation for brokers and promoters, as Joseph Nocera describes in his new book on the modern revolution in personal finance: so many young people sent to college with the fruits of farsighted investment policies, so many Americans already living, or expectantly planning, a comfortable retirement thanks to the judgment and pluck of the portfolio managers at Fidelity or T. Rowe or Vanguard. Indeed, the mutual fund companies themselves have become prized corporate takeover targets, with Mellon Bank Corp. buying Dreyfus Corp., Van Kampen Merritt Cos. acquiring American Capital Management and Kansas City Southern (formerly a railroad company) stepping up its existing stake in Berger Associates (a Denver mutual fund company that has nothing to do with railroads). The zeal of the Clinton-era mutual fund company buyers is reminiscent of the Carter-era oil company buyers or the Reagan-era real estate developers: in each cycle, enthusiasts concluded that the recent past could be extrapolated into the indefinite future. We will now have the opportunity to see if securities valuations (unlike oil prices and office-building rents) can grow to the sky.

The overriding issue, political as well as economic, is whether the rush into mutual funds constitutes a financial disaster in the making, or simply one more stage in the material ascent of the American people. Is the public this time doing the right thing at the right time? In the past, even in the recent bull-market past, it frequently has done the wrong thing at the wrong time. In 1983, for example, a year after the start of the great financial levitation but on the eve of a devastating break in technology stocks, and in 1987, before the crash, people wanted to see their principal grow. Often, they saw it shrink first. In 1985-86 and again in 1992-93, what they demanded was income: and in 1987 and 1994, the bond market, where they hoped to find safe and sane yields, disappointed them as it already has disappointed Clinton. Nor has the mass of investors fared any better when it single-mindedly sought safety. The years in which cash was the most popular mutual fund investment—at the bottom of the bear market in 1982 and in the wake of the crash in 1987—were just the years in which a clairvoyant would have invested in common stocks.

As for the present day, it bears an interesting resemblance to 1972, the year preceding the bear market of 1973-74. According to the latest data, the public favors "high-risk" investments (stocks and bonds and stock funds and bond funds) over "low-risk" investments (money market funds, CDs, savings deposits etc.). For every discretionary household investment dollar, about 54 cents these days is at risk in long-dated securities. In 1972 about 56 cents were at risk, the highest such preference on record. By 1982, at low ebb in the last cycle, when the word finally had got out about stocks and bonds—unrepaying and unreliable, people had come to believe, much inferior to oil and gas drilling tax partnerships, gold coins or real estate—high-risk investments had fallen to 39 cents on the household dollar.

Thus, more like politics than science or technology, the story of financial markets is the story of ups and downs. Mainly, the stock market does go up—it has been the superior long-term investment for many decades—but it has not risen every year, nor, in the years in which it has risen the most, has the public usually profited the most. Indeed, as a rule, observes Robert Beckwitt, one of the leading lights at the mutual fund giant Fidelity, the market does better when the public is relatively underinvested in stocks, as in the 1950s and 1980s, than when it is relatively highly committed, as in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As for the outlook for the rest of the decade, let the record show that the public has become deeply committed all over again.

Although mankind has contrived to advance from horsepower to the internal combustion engine to the microchip without once regressing all the way back to horsepower, no such unbroken line of march has occurred, or could occur, on Wall Street. People would not allow it to happen. Let us suppose that the public learned the historical lesson that stocks have handily outperformed cash, bonds and gold for generations. Realizing this and projecting more of the same experience, what would the average person do? He or she would do what millions of Americans recently have done, namely buy stocks and stock mutual funds. Naturally, their buying would cause stock prices to rise, and just as certainly the bull market would set in motion a countervailing reaction. Entrepreneurs, investment bankers and mutual-fund promoters—the suppliers of new common stocks—would mobilize, selling the public more and more of what it demanded, reaching further and further down in the barrel of American business for new equity issues. As the quantity went up, the quality would go down. Stocks would become a less superior investment as the news of their inherent superiority gained credence, and the process of decay would continue until the market retreated. At that moment, a new investment idea would come to the fore. Whatever the undoubted merit of stocks over a very long-term horizon, people would say, it is better to be safe than sorry.

This was exactly what people believed for a generation after the 1929 crash. They believed it after the 1987 panic, too, but resumed doubting it only a few months later. The preeminent lesson of the Reagan crash, most investors have decided, is that you can't keep a good stock market down.

The business of the market, even in this day of electronic wonders, is the business of crowds. "Crowds do not admit doubt or uncertainty," as Gustave LeBon said, "and always go to extremes." Or recurrently do. The age of the automatic teller machine and the credit card and the neural network is also, atavistically, the age of the S&L disaster, the banking near-disaster and the stock market panic, panic either to the upside (as in 1991) or the downside (as in 1987). Money fires every neuron in the human head. It touches the greed-and-fear regions of the brain no less than the subtler departments concerned with computing the present value of future streams of income or deciding what IBM is going to earn next year.

The foregoing—the cyclical, or rueful, theory of investment dynamics—has competed unsuccessfully for many years with the ultra-bullish theory. Spokesmen for the idea of perpetual improvement have had it their way throughout the upswing of the 1980s and now into the 1990s, and they have become a trial and ordeal to the bears. So long has the stock market risen, so deeply ingrained has the all-season superiority of equity investments become, that a new era—one of genuine, cumulative progress in financial affairs—is now regularly proclaimed. "Buy Stocks Now!" said the cover of the June issue of *Money* magazine, the opti-

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mists' favorite financial reading. "Forget the recent market tumble. We've shifted from a nation of CD savers to stock fund investors. The resulting cascade of cash will power the Dow to 5000 before the end of the decade."

Joseph Nocera argues the case for progress in his new book, an account of the public's graduation from checkbooks and savings accounts to credit cards and mutual funds. It is the history of the VISA card, the Fidelity mutual fund organization, *Money* magazine, Charles Schwab & Co., the money market fund and the Merrill Lynch Cash Management Account, among other modern financial fixtures, and of the people who invented them. Nocera, a prize-winning financial columnist of GQ magazine, is a partisan of the middle-class and an enthusiast for what he rightly describes as a revolution in personal finance. His heroes range from the investor Peter Lynch, whom he almost canonizes, to the brokerage-firm entrepreneur Charles Schwab to the credit card pioneer Dee Hock ("and if you found his surname almost comically apt for someone in the credit card business, you were best advised to keep it to yourself"). Nocera describes the democratic vision of Charles Merrill, founder of the great brokerage house, and the blindness of those who clung to the old ways: to regulated interest rates, anti-democratic tendencies in money management and arch-conservatism in investment philosophy. I should disclose that I myself figure among the mossbacks.

A Piece of the Action is a very fine specimen of journalism. Nocera has read extensively and talked to scores of sources. He writes fluently, and his anecdotes will hold a reader's interest even if, from time to time, his subject matter does not. The true, inside story of the showdown between the Utah state bankers and Merrill Lynch over the advent of money market mutual funds, for example, is described at what can only be described as generous length. I will not give away the ending.

For the most part, though, Nocera does succeed in breathing life into inanimate things. At its best, the book is clear, accessible and engaging, as in the description of the administrative savior brought in to run Charles Schwab & Co. in the brokerage firm's early chaotic phase: "The man's name was Lawrence Stupski, and if it's possible to describe a corporate bureaucrat as a breath of fresh air, that's what Stupski was."

About the existence of this financial revolution, no reader of Nocera's will have a doubt. The great question is how the change bears on financial markets and on the hopes of the American electorate for a secure financial future. Either a golden new age has dawned, as Nocera implies, or it has not. Either the public will continue to enrich itself in mutual fund investing—suffering an occasional loss but never a devastating reversal of fortune—or it will not. Nocera implies the latter. The Mutual Fund President and his administration will hope that he's right, as will Fidelity and its millions of customers with their tens of billions of invested dollars: indeed, almost everybody who compulsively turns to the stock prices in a newspaper in the morning will be in Nocera's corner, rooting.

Even if Nocera's financial conclusions were right, however, his historical reasoning is questionable. The mailing of 60,000 credit cards to an unsuspecting public by the Bank of America in 1958 may constitute a landmark event in the annals of American plastic. Nocera's claim for its greater meaning, however—that it marked the start of the money revolution itself—is debatable. Before this act of capitalist enlightenment, so the author seems to suggest, there was mainly repression and darkness in American finance: J.P. Morgan and his acolytes, bankers who paid little or no interest on the public's deposits and would have laughed the buttons off their bulging vests if a working man had had the temerity to ask for a loan. As for Wall Street in that distant day, Nocera writes, "The markets were run by Morgan and other wealthy insiders for their own benefit, and woe to anyone who tried to interfere." It is an indictment that might have been lifted from a Bryanite tract, though not from Robert Sobel's history of the New York Stock Exchange, *The Big Board*, which contains an inspiring account of the Rich Man's Panic of 1903, in which the very people whom Nocera contends wielded a market monopoly suffered an especially sharp loss. The public, on the other hand, according to Sobel, emerged relatively unscathed.

Does it matter to the nonstudent of financial history that this simple picture of two financial epochs, one good and the other bad, one new and the other old, is a caricature? It does: first, because the historical truth is more interesting than the parody. Second, because the truth (if my truth is truer than Nocera's) implies a very different outcome for America's new mutual fund holders than the beer-and-skittles version implied by *A Piece of the Action*.

Thirty years after the Rich Man's Panic, around the time of the Roosevelt bank holiday (the nonfestive suspension of payments ordered to stave off a nationwide depositors' run), Miss Anna Kuhlmann, 55 years old, of 655 Green-

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wich Street, New York, pointed out a banker on the street to a pair of Manhattan detectives. The man, Nicholas Roberts, president of S.W. Straus & Co., an underwriter of high-yield mortgage bonds in the 1920s boom years, was arrested on the spot and carried off to the Old Slip police station and charged with grand larceny. In this one forgotten encounter is distilled a myriad of facts and possibilities denied or glossed over by Nocera: the age-old tendency to reach for yield (often reaching too far) in times of falling interest rates; the periodic occurrence of bear markets so wrenching as to discredit entire asset classes and demonize the bull market heroes after the bull market ends. Investment cycles turn, and phases of overoptimism give way to bouts of despair. Nocera would have us believe that, thanks to the money revolution, the cycle has become tamed and that risk has been domesticated. I doubt it. We will see.

The movement, which accelerated in 1933, to socialize risk in lending and borrowing constitutes another revolution in American financial affairs, although it is one that Nocera does not dwell on. If the fruits of credit have been democratized widely, it is partly because a number of the associated banking risks have become nationalized. The consequences of this revolution have been profound, not least, of course, the subsidizing by the public of the last real estate boom. In effect, the Morgans of yesteryear have been transmuted into the federal regulatory agencies of today, but the contemporary, governmental stewards of American finance are up against the same obstacle that Morgan faced in trying to fight back the panic of 1907. The financial markets have become too big to be easily manipulated.

What Nocera convincingly shows is that the banking world has only belatedly come to appreciate that the average working person is an honorable debtor. His description of the evolution of the VISA card is especially rich, although I would quibble that the democratization of credit was a far longer and more drawn out process than he allows. It was as long ago as 1928 when the predecessor to Citibank got into the personal lending business by answering an appeal of the New York state attorney general for help in combating loansharking. To its pleasant surprise, Citi discovered that the business paid handsomely and that the shylocks had been on to something all along.

It is easy in markets to mistake a recurring cycle for a unique event, and Nocera, I think, frequently does. His belief that financial progress is cumulative, not cyclical, is his historical undoing and also, perhaps more importantly, the source of his wide-eyed optimism about markets today. Thus, for instance, he contends that money "came out of the closet" in the great inflation of the 1970s, as if it hadn't been a decent topic for conversation during the McKinley boom or the Roaring '20s or in the silver agitation of the 1890s. As for the single-minded pursuit by investors of high-yield investments in the early 1980s, we are informed that it constituted "one of the great behavioral shifts in American finance." But it, too, had its antecedents, in the sale of foreign bonds to yield-groping savers in the 1920s or in the purchase of 100-year railroad bonds by anxious life insurance companies at the turn of the century (when expert opinion was nearly unanimous that interest rates would only decline from the already depressed reaches of 3 percent; as might be expected, they proceeded to rise, through 1920).

It was ever thus in financial affairs. No sooner is a new era launched than it ignominiously springs a leak. The baby-boom generation, which once believed that it invented sex, now is on the verge of deciding that it has solved the mystery of wealth. In moments of uncharacteristic weakness, Nocera facilitates this delusion, for instance by innocently writing: "Rarely has any American industry had a better group of headliners to serve as role models and spokesmen. The sports equivalent would have been if Michael Jordan had never gambled; Charles Barkley had never spit at a fan; Magic Johnson had never become infected with HIV as a result of his own reckless sexual behavior." Nothing could be further from the spirit and the letter of a helpful Wall Street axiom that is not quoted in these pages: "Don't confuse brains with a bull market." It will be a slogan much on the lips of congressional investigators during the inevitable, forthcoming (six to nine months after the bottom of the next bear market) investigation of the fallen U.S. mutual fund industry.

JAMES GRANT, editor of *Grant's Interest Rate Observer*, is the author of *Money of the Mind: Borrowing and Lending in America from the Civil War to Michael Milken* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux).

Before Virtue

BY ALEXANDER NEHAMAS

Shame and Necessity by Bernard Williams

(University of California Press, 254 pp., $25)

According to a venerable tradition, human beings are ultimately at home in the world. Every version of this tradition—Platonist, Christian, Hegelian—concedes that as things stand, individually and collectively, we often meet with unexpected, even undeserved disaster. Still, in principle at least, if we consistently followed the dictates of reason, always set our course by the beacon of faith or succeeded in establishing a perfect social union, then human fate would be in harmony with the world's shape.

Is such harmony possible? Is there, as Bernard Williams asks, "beyond some things that human beings have themselves shaped ... anything at all that is intrinsically shaped to human interests, in particular to human beings' ethical interests"? If there is, then no harm could come to those who do the right thing. Virtue and happiness would go together.

There are several versions of this optimistic view. Most confidently, we might hold that if we became as perfect as human beings could be, our desires to do the right thing always would produce the right results and secure our happiness. More modestly, we might hope that living morally would at least secure our own story a fitting place within the larger story of the world as a whole; failing to achieve happiness, we would at least find a justification, a reason for our failure. Even more weakly, we could expect that acting with the right intentions would at least free us of responsibility for whatever awful but unintended and unexpected results our actions brought about. In all its guises, however, this picture focuses, among the numberless things we do every day, only on those actions for which we are morally

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accountable. It attributes to them, and only to them, a role in shaping the overall quality of each individual's life.

Williams does not distinguish between these versions. Though the differences between them are not insignificant, he is concerned with the picture's broadest outlines. Despite their many disagreements, on this basic issue philosophers such as

> Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel are all on the same side, all believing in one way or another that the universe or history or the structure of human reason can, properly understood, yield a pattern that makes sense of human life and human aspirations.

By yielding happiness, meaning or innocence, moral action is always ultimately justified.

Williams argues that this philosophical tradition, which has become virtually a part of our common sense, is profoundly wrong. He has characterized morality, perhaps a little too stringently, as the "peculiar institution" which claims that human action is justified only when we engage in it as a result of recognizing that we have an obligation to do so. For morality, obligations (and the sense of duty that attends them) provide the only proper motives, and only a stronger obligation can cause us to deviate from some course of action that we already have decided to pursue on moral grounds. Moral obligations are inescapable and they apply in the same way to everybody: they are "universal." They are also "categorical"; that is, they are not conditional upon any further goals or desires that we may have, and they are to be pursued despite our personal, idiosyncratic inclinations and preferences. Finally, responsibility, praise and blame are assigned only in respect to actions that we perform voluntarily.

Williams is an enemy of morality, but an advocate of liberalism. He believes that the prospects of liberalism as a political view are better once it is divorced from the philosophical morality with which it has so often been connected. And he believes that the Greeks supply us with the materials for constructing a picture of the world in which such a divorce is possible. The Greeks, of course, were in no way liberal, but their thoughts about the psychology and the significance of human action are compatible with liberal politics. In this respect, Williams provides a poignant alternative to Alasdair Macintyre, who in *After Virtue* and a number of other works has returned to the Greeks, particularly to Aristotle, in order to attack liberalism, the Enlightenment and much of modernity in general. But then, as readers of *Shame and Necessity* will not fail to notice, Aristotle is not Williams's favorite thinker.

In his earlier books, *Moral Luck* and *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, Williams criticized the dominant conception of morality. Though he associates it primarily with the thought of Kant, he claims that it constitutes a long tradition beginning with Plato and spanning most of Christianity. He believes that this morality is probably incoherent; that it is too abstract to take into account the particular situations in which most of our decisions are made; and that it leaves a major part of human behavior and life untouched. In this sense, many if not most of our actions are not moral, and yet they are essential to the nature of our identities and our lives. Some of Williams's criticisms of the traditional notion of morality may not be as detailed or articulate as everyone would wish, but his work constitutes the most serious contemporary questioning of the basic assumptions of a large part of our moral philosophy. Williams is playing for high stakes. What he sometimes lacks in explicitness he always makes up for in flair, vision and imagination. He has his own voice, and he is using it to say that the moral thing is not always the right thing to do.

In his new book, Williams wants to provide the elements of a view of the world from which providence is altogether absent, and he finds these elements in the ethical ideas of the early Greeks—in Homer, and especially in Sophocles and Thucydides, who are the true heroes of this book. Instead of a world always hospitable to us and our endeavors, Sophocles and Thucydides picture

> human beings ... dealing sensibly, foolishly, sometimes catastrophically, sometimes nobly, with a world that is only partially intelligible to human agency and in itself is not necessarily well adjusted to ethical aspirations.

Even under the most ideal circumstances, we may not be rewarded for doing the right (or "ethical") thing. A reader of Williams will conclude that the search for the *hamartia*, or "tragic flaw," of Sophoclean heroes like Oedipus or Ajax, which supposedly accounts for the disastrous outcome of their actions, is vain and misguided. The whole point is that there is no flaw. There are only human beings acting as well as they can under the circumstances in which they find themselves, and facing disaster nonetheless.

A long tradition connects Homer to Aeschylus, Sophocles and Thucydides and spans most of archaic Greek literature. According to Williams, this tradition comes to an end with the emergence of the main legacy of philosophy as we have come to know it—with Socrates (and Euripides), with Plato, Aristotle and

> all those who have thought that somehow or other, in this life or the next, morally if not materially, as individuals or as an historical collective, we shall be safe; or, if not safe, at least reassured that at some level of the world's constitution there is something to be discovered that makes ultimate sense of our concerns.

As much in his distrust of morality as in his admiration for the archaic, prephilosophical Greeks, Williams owes a lot to Nietzsche. And though he is by no means an uncritical admirer of the German philosopher, Nietzsche's presence is felt throughout the elegant, absorbing discussions that make up the

The Countryside You Knew

was what I traveled there to see.
It was as if heaven itself
had been liquefied, poured, and set
to jell on eighty-eight acres.
The things you'd written of, I found:
the rushed plunge of clouds at dusk; birds
spreading their wings to catch the wind;
a creek that bore your name through groves
of pine; the bees that followed walls
in search of warm panes, facing south.

Here's my window, someone said,
as I closed the door to your room.
Later (a barge drifting to sleep),
I breathed a little easier
knowing I would soon wake to find
what you once rose to see: last fall's
ruined wall rebuilt; crows ceding
ground to morning planters; a girl
approaching a farmhouse at dusk—
in her hand, the year's last lily,
softening her late arrival.

ROBERT RICHMAN

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bulk of *Shame and Necessity*.

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche had glorified the "tragic" outlook of the earlier Greeks, who, he claimed, accepted the existence of an ineliminable clash between our needs and dreams on the one hand and the nature of the world on the other. Moreover, this clash was not, for them, a cause for regret. On the contrary, the works of Aeschylus and Sophocles exult in the heroes who try to impose their will upon the world only to become, inevitably, its victims. By contrast, Socrates and the philosophical tradition that he initiated claimed that this clash is the product of our own imperfect understanding of nature, of our ignorance of how to harmonize our activities with the world's script. The clash is a regrettable fact, a profound error, and it can be eliminated if we come to know both who we really are and what the world is really like. Knowledge can secure virtue and happiness.

Nietzsche gradually abandoned his naïve plan to return to a new version of tragic Greek culture through Wagner's music-dramas. Williams has never been tempted by such a fantasy: "It is not a question of *reviving* anything." He wants to study the archaic Greeks because he is convinced that our ethical thought is more continuous with theirs than we are often tempted to think. We can learn a lot about ourselves from them, and their views may help us question and perhaps even overcome the Platonic tradition. Studying the classics for Williams, as for Nietzsche, is not merely an antiquarian project: it is, as it should be, a critical endeavor as well.

To succeed in his noble and ambitious enterprise, Williams must persuade us of at least three things. First, he must show that the archaic Greek tradition is still intellectually available to us. We still must share with the Greeks at least some of the basic ideas through which we interpret and evaluate human action. Their ethical categories all cannot have died with their gods, who were so often thought to be the cause and the explanation of the catastrophes that thwarted the best human intentions. Second, the early Greeks' belief that the world will not fully accommodate human needs and aspirations cannot be tied so intimately to their religion that to accept that belief would require the revival of paganism. Their gods *are* dead. Third, some of the Greeks' views must be, in relevant respects, superior to our own.

The main obstacle to thinking that contemporary views of human action are continuous with those of the archaic Greeks is provided by the approach that Williams characterizes as "progressivism." This is the view that there is progress in moral theory: that "the Greeks had primitive ideas of action, responsibility, ethical motivation, and justice," and that these primitive ideas were gradually replaced by today's sophisticated and mature understanding. In a series of brilliant analyses of their Homeric texts, Williams undermines the belief in progress in two ways. He shows that Homer's attitudes toward human action are more complex than the progressivists suppose, and he shows that the modern notions upon which progressivists pride themselves are naïve and unacceptable.

Bruno Snell, the great German classicist who inaugurated the progressivist approach, argued that Homer did not think of persons as single, unified wholes. Both on the psychological and on the physical level, Homeric people were, in Snell's account, collections of semi-independent parts, each capable of decision and action in its own right. Thus Homer had no unified conception of agency and no clear sense of responsibility: the gods' influence upon Homer's heroes regularly deprived them of both credit and blame (though, to be accurate, more often of the latter).

Williams argues, by contrast, that Homer consistently attributes deliberation, decision, action and responsibility to his heroes, and cites the texts to prove his claim. He shows that for Homer the unified agent is the human person as a whole. Deiphobos, for instance, "wondered two ways / whether to draw back and find some other high-hearted / Trojan to be his companion, or whether to attempt [Aeneas] singly." Progressivists overlook this obvious fact, however, since they believe that the real unity to which both agency and responsibility are correctly ascribed is not the human person as a whole, but the soul on the psychological level and the body, which is opposed to the soul, on the physical level. Not finding these objects in Homer's texts, all they see is a collection of parts. But body and soul as independent objects do not exist, Williams claims, and Homer was right not to have envisaged them. The breakdown of the human person into those two disparate parts is the product of the misguided philosophical approach that first appears with Plato.

The historical part of Williams's argument is foolproof. Yet he supplements it with a considerably more controversial line of thought. He suggests that people find Homeric concepts of action deficient because Homeric action does "*not* revolve round a distinction between moral and nonmoral motivations." There is nothing in Homer, particularly the faculty of the will, that serves the interests of duty and underwrites moral action. And if morality is an institution that we accept, characters without it are bound to appear primitive. Characters who never act out of a sense of duty and obligation are bound to be too different from us to teach us anything about ourselves.

Williams argues that it was Plato who first introduced the view that the basic categories of human action must be understood in terms of moral concepts. What he means by this is not always clear, but the central notion seems to be that Plato took human action to be successful to the extent that it aimed at what really was good. This is the main goal of his tripartite division of the soul into reason, "spirit" (emotion or passion) and appetite. Only if "reason rules" in the soul is action truly the agent's own, since only then is it motivated by a concern for the welfare of that agent as a whole. And only if reason rules is action virtuous. If either of the other parts is dominant, then deliberation, decision and action proceed only in a stunted way. People do not deliberate about what is in their best interest; they are, in fact, in conflict with themselves. Action that is not rational is neither genuine nor virtuous. It cannot secure the agent's good. It produces unhappiness. Human action cannot be understood apart from its ethical dimension.

Williams urges that we abandon this model. He wishes to distinguish between psychological and ethical categories, and thus to "return to the Homeric condition." This "return," however, is not a revival of a tradition that we have lost. As Williams insists, the Homeric condition is one that is still very much alive, and forms one of the many strands of which our own ethical situation consists. The troubling question, of course, is whether the Homeric condition, independent as it seems of morality, has a place for responsibility, without which no social organization is possible. Williams believes that it does. Through an analysis of Homeric texts he shows that the early Greeks could account for responsibility and associated notions like intention and cause. In this respect, too, our thought is more continuous with theirs than the progressivists' account allows.

But wait. The Greeks seem to ascribe responsibility in ways significantly different from our own. In Greek thought, responsibility is often detached from

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intention. When it came to killing, in particular, murderers and their families, even their cities, became subject to *miasma* or ritual pollution. *Miasma*, as in the case of Oedipus in *Oedipus Rex*, could be removed only if the killer was banished or killed, whether or not the killing had been intentional. One could argue, of course, that Oedipus had killed his father intentionally: Laius blocked his path, and he removed him. But surely the meaning of intention is transformed by the fact that Oedipus had been fated, before his birth, by the gods' decree, to perform that deed.

Moreover, examples from Greek legal thought show that clearly unintentional events, like the killing of a boy who ran into the path of a thrown javelin, were agreed to subject the killer to pollution. In this imaginary case (which Pericles is reputed to have spent a whole day discussing with the philosopher Protagoras), part of the dispute was precisely over who the killer actually was: the boy who threw the javelin or the boy who ran into its path? Since everyone agreed that neither boy intended the result, intention clearly is not required for responsibility. Does this show a fundamental difference between the Greeks and us?

Williams answers that it does not. First, through an analysis of a number of passages in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, he shows that Homer certainly recognizes the notion of intention, and in many cases connects it with the idea of responsibility. Second, Williams points out that intention and responsibility, in many aspects of contemporary civil law, do not go hand in hand. Third, he argues that when we do consider intention central to responsibility (as we do in the criminal law that covers cases like the killing of the boy by the javelin) the reason is not that we possess a deeper notion of ("moral") responsibility than the Greeks, but that we have a different legal system.

In ancient Athens, all prosecutions were brought by individuals. Today, criminal proceedings are solely the state's province. This vast power we have given the state needs to be counterbalanced, Williams claims, by a set of constraints ensuring that individuals not be subject to the state's power to punish unless they act intentionally in ways that put the state and their fellow-citizens at risk. In other words, Williams believes that where we differ from the Greeks in the way we determine responsibility, it is not because our notion of responsibility is more refined, but because we have a different attitude toward political freedom.

This is certainly part of the explanation, but I am not sure that it tells the whole story. Many criminal cases in England were still brought by individuals as recently as the early nineteenth century. The connection between the power of the state and the importance of intention must be less intimate, therefore, than Williams suggests. It may be true, moreover, that in civil cases, where damages are the issue, parties are considered responsible for certain unforeseen results of their actions simply because they have entered into certain relationships with the world. Being liable for damages does not in itself reflect on the character of the penalized party. In criminal law, however, the issue is not one of damages. Rather, what is most often involved in establishing responsibility is whether someone is or is not a "criminal." And being a criminal is not simply a matter of behavior: being a criminal is a question of character, and reference to people's intentions is essential to establishing their character. I suspect that it is a mistake to think that the criminal is a type of person and that "the criminal" constitutes a moral category. Still, whether it is a mistake or not, its importance in criminal law shows that it is not only issues of political freedom, as Williams claims, that separate us from the ancient Greeks in the matter of ascribing legal responsibility. We give intention a more central role in our thought for reasons that are psychological and moral as well.

But since this, as I said, may be a mistake, Williams could accept my criticism and still insist that Greek thought on this issue was healthier and more straightforward than our own. Sophocles' Ajax kills himself because he cannot live with the humiliation of having slaughtered, as a result of being made mad by Athena, a flock of sheep that he mistook for Odysseus and his allies. This shows that the idea that we can have our life destroyed because of actions for which we are in no way to blame was absolutely crucial, almost commonplace in the early Greek view of the world. Since Williams believes that both this idea and its companion—that we can be praised for actions that we were not, strictly speaking, justified in performing—are correct, he argues that the Greek framework is superior to ours.

One can object here that we often recognize such situations today. Drivers who kill children through no fault of their own can be tortured by the event the rest of their lives. But though I think we recognize these situations, we often consider such "extreme" reactions irrational, for unlike the Greeks, we gener-

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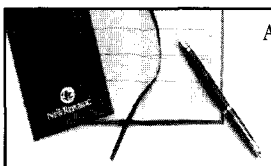

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ally don't treat them in major works of art, or we treat them very differently. *Sophie's Choice* and works like it present us with characters we are to pity for their misfortunes, not to admire, as we do Ajax and Oedipus, for their nobility. (Styron's novel is better than its title: Sophie did not have a choice.) In Sartre's "The Wall," Pablo Ibbieta is asked to betray his comrade in exchange for his own life. In an effort to mock and to mislead his captors, Ibbieta sends them to a place he is sure his friend is not. But his comrade had changed hiding places overnight. He is captured, and Ibbieta's life is spared. But it is also destroyed, not because he did something for which he was not to blame, but precisely because he did something intentionally for which he is as responsible as he would have been had he led the fascists willingly and directly to his friend.

Williams is aware that another obstacle to finding continuities between the Greeks and ourselves is the common view that the Greeks lived in what we now call a "shame culture" as opposed to our own culture, which is dominated by guilt as the basic ethical feeling. Shame is supposed to be directed to, and prompted by, what other people think of us, and many people hardly consider it a moral feeling at all. Guilt, on the other hand, is held to depend only on our own attitude toward ourselves. It is "autonomous," and it can ground moral behavior, which must never be motivated by what we think other people believe about us.

In one of his best chapters, Williams argues that shame and guilt are not as radically opposed to one another as many people think. He admits that shame may originate in an atavistic experience of being observed by others while one is in a compromising state, especially when one is naked. But shame develops into a much more complex feeling. It still involves the idea of being observed by others; but those others are people one respects, others who themselves would be ashamed to be observed in a similar situation. On another level, moreover, shame involves an internal observer, who is a projection of everything one admires and respects in one's own community. This internal observer is neither identical with the agent nor a perfectly abstract idealization. It is the product of our being situated within a particular social group consisting of at least some people whose opinions matter to us, and whose evaluations of ourselves and of life in general we want to make our own. Shame is both internal (and to that extent autonomous) and connected to our social situation (and to that extent concrete). It acknowledges that we have an inner life *and* that we are members of a community from which we cannot divorce ourselves and whose views and values are essential to our lives.

Williams argues that Homeric characters as well as Sophocles' Ajax do not evaluate themselves only in terms of how they appear to others. He insists correctly, though not always perfectly clearly, that the Greek word *aidōs*, which is usually translated as "shame," can cover a number of the phenomena associated with guilt, particularly in regard to actions that have implications for other people: "What I have done points in one direction towards what has happened to others, in another direction to what I am. Guilt looks primarily in the first direction.... Shame looks to what I am." Precisely because shame involves a conception of an agent's own identity, Williams argues that shame is broader than guilt, and that it contains the possibility of controlling and learning from guilt. Shame sets a standard for what we want to be. "Shame can understand guilt, but guilt cannot understand itself." Knowing what I take myself to be reveals what it is that I should or should not feel guilty about. Once again, Williams concludes that Greek ethical views are continuous with our own, and can help us improve our understanding of our own practices.

Williams is not nostalgic about the ethical glories of Greece. He devotes a chapter to two ancient institutions that he denounces squarely and unequivocally: slavery and the treatment of women. Even in respect of these institutions, however, he believes that we are not as superior to the Greeks as we might like to think. The Greeks, Williams argues, did not consider slavery a just institution. Who became a slave was a matter of luck, brought about arbitrarily and by violence, and early Greek literature is full of evidence that slavery was considered an injustice. Aristotle was the only Greek who tried to defend slavery on ethical grounds, arguing that both slavery as a whole and the fact that some particular people were slaves of others are just; and Williams shows how lame the Aristotelian argument is. Williams's view is that the Greeks were always clear on the injustice of slavery, but could not conceive of their society without it. Accordingly, they left the matter aside, collectively avoiding coming to terms with it. In this, it seems to me, our own tolerance of extraordinary disparities in the division of individual and national wealth, knowing all the while that a world without them would be better while having no idea how such a world could come about, is not so very different.

Williams believes, again, that the major differences between the Greeks and us are not ethical, but political. We still accept, he writes, that the lives many people lead in society are unjust, the products of necessity and luck. But "modern liberal thought," of which not a trace existed in antiquity, "demands—more realistically speaking, it hopes—that those concepts, necessity and luck, should not *take the place* of considerations of justice." This means that our aim should be to construct a world in which we can never justify why some people live badly by saying, "It's better that way after all."

But how far can we go in this direction? How much control can we exercise on the world? At times, I suspect, Williams may be too optimistic about our prospects. His opinion is this:

> Modern liberalism ... has given itself the task of constructing a framework of social justice to control necessity and chance, in the sense both of mitigating their effects on the individual and of showing that what cannot be mitigated is not unjust.

But how, exactly, are we to determine what can and what cannot be mitigated here? How can we create a framework that will ensure that "the necessities will not be radically coercive and the luck will be no worse than luck"?

Perhaps there is a way to do this; but unless we are given detailed directions for finding it, this task seems to me to express a relic of the second version of the providential thesis that Williams rejects. This is the version according to which people who cannot find happiness in the world can still find a story in which they do not appear as victims, or at least in which their misery is not necessary for the happiness of somebody else. The task is to construct a world in which everything human beings do to one another is just and everything that is not just is not the result of human action. I have my doubts that such a task can ever be completed, that such a story can be told. Liberalism, which Williams unfortunately does not discuss in detail, may be our best hope for justice and fairness. Williams may also be right that liberalism, however defined, involves the hope that a world such as we have been describing should be our goal. The question is whether such a goal is possible in a world of scarce resources, populated by beings like us. I don't believe that the prospects are

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very encouraging.

In his final chapter, Williams addresses questions of possibility, freedom and power. His examples are drawn mostly from Greek tragedy, and he returns to a question he had asked earlier. Much of the effect of Greek tragedy depends on the presence of supernatural powers that decree that heroes often do things independently of their own desires and plans. How is it possible for tragedy to have an effect on us, and how can we learn anything from it, if we no longer believe in anything like the Greek view of the gods and of their intervention in human affairs? Williams answers that, crucial as supernatural intervention may be to Greek tragedy, the genre still speaks directly to us because we are often faced with situations not of our own making that force us to decide to act one way or another without any guarantee that our decision, however correct, will prevent disaster. We are faced with tragic dilemmas not because the gods have wanted them, but because the world simply does not have a place for many of our own desires, plans and interests.

It has been argued against Williams that most people today do believe, in fact, that such tragic dilemmas are possible. The providential view that he attacks is shared only by a small sect of philosophers, tempted by Platonic or Christian assumptions, while the rest of us recognize that our lives and the world have not been made to measure. Isn't this, after all, part of the very meaning of what it is to be "modern"?

I believe, with Williams, that the moral view of the world that was originated in Plato, disseminated through Christianity, codified by Kant and developed in some of the more optimistic rationalist dreams of the Enlightenment is very much alive. I also believe that it is alive not only in the minds of a few philosophers, but also in the minds of most other people. Yet deciding whether this is true or not is not only, or not primarily, a matter of theoretical investigation. It also requires serious self-examination. We need to ask to what extent our own thought and our own lives still depend on believing—or hoping—that we will finally get what we truly want. We need to ask with great care whether we belong to the "we" that Williams sometimes contrasts and sometimes assimilates to the Greeks. This question is exactly as complex as the question whether Williams (who is, after all, one of "us") is himself finally free of the tradition that he attacks in this remarkable book. And that question, in turn, is as complex as the question whether it is really possible to free oneself from that tradition: Can we live a life from which all grounds for justification have been removed?

"God is dead," wrote Nietzsche, "but given the way of men, there may still be caves for thousands of years in which his shadow will still be shown.—And we—we still have to vanquish his shadow, too." One such shadow, perhaps, is Williams's optimistic picture of the possibilities of liberalism. Another is his assimilation of Sophocles' view of the world with that of Thucydides. In Sophocles' plays, it is true, human beings are shown faced with irredeemable disaster through no fault of their own; and so Williams's readings are deeply convincing. But Oedipus's or Ajax's misfortune is still brought about by the intervention of a supernatural power—Athena in the case of Ajax, an impersonal fate in the case of Oedipus. And this suggests that the world does after all have a plan, a story of its own, whether we can understand it or not. It is a plan in which we do not fit, but it does provide a sort of explanation for what happens to us. As Dionysus says to Cadmus at the end of Euripides' *Bacchae*, when Cadmus pleads with him to curb his anger, "This is the way my father Zeus has long ordained all this." This is cold comfort, but it is comfort still. Even Oedipus, in his despair, is willing to blame Apollo for his misfortunes. Someone, or something, has done this to us.

My own view is that Sophocles' tragic world-view, as Williams himself describes it, is itself a version of the second variant of the optimistic thesis we have been discussing. Sophocles presents a world in which, whether through the intervention of personal or impersonal forces, human beings find themselves, by no fault of their own, in impossible situations. But these forces, whether we can understand how they operate or not, are themselves instruments of understanding. Even if we can never know why Fate or Athena disposed of the lives of Oedipus or Ajax as they did, we do know why Oedipus's and Ajax's lives were disposed as they were: Fate and Athena arranged matters just so. Benevolence, malevolence or even callousness on the part of the gods are still present in our lives. Being toys for the gods is not a glorious purpose for human life, but it is a purpose nonetheless.

None of this is true in Thucydides. Compare the view of Sophocles with that of Thucydides as Williams characterizes it:

> Thucydides certainly believed that the world's course was not governed by supernatural purposes and also that *gnomē* [judgment] could do something to control it, but he had a powerful sense of the limitations of foresight, and of the uncontrollable impact of chance.

This is a view of a world that is completely de-deified. Thucydides believes that nothing other than sheer contingency—that which simply cannot be explained—affects our plans in ways we cannot control. "The uncontrollable impact of chance" is not only impersonal; it does not only lack reasons; it is not only bereft of a plan of its own: it is not even an object. For Thucydides, nothing explains why our plans and aspirations so often fall apart as they do: nothing has done this to us, nothing is to blame. This is the view of the world that we must accept, if providence is to be excluded altogether. In reading Thucydides as if his view were equivalent to that of Sophocles, Williams reveals, to me, a lingering desire for a world that is not as senseless as he officially believes it to be. In this, he seems to be slightly less free of the Platonist-Kantian tradition he so forcefully attacks.

Still, in showing how difficult it is to leave this tradition behind, he accomplishes two things. His own example forces his readers to look into themselves more thoroughly than they might have done otherwise, and to dispense with the easy rejections of "Western metaphysics" that were and still are popular among many philosophers and critics. And he also prepares the ground for continuing the important discussion his recent work has inaugurated. *Shame and Necessity* is an extraordinary work of philology, literary criticism and philosophy. Williams puts philosophy in the service of life. It is an appropriately Nietzschean compliment, and one can make it, alas, of very few philosophers today.

ALEXANDER NEHAMAS teaches philosophy and comparative literature at Princeton University.

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ÉIREANN DIARIST

Cast a warm eye

ARRIVAL. IN AUGUST MY WIFE AND I flew to Ireland on Aer Lingus, along with a lot of Irish people who were returning from holidays in America. When the plane landed, the chief flight attendant's soft accent came over the P.A.: "Welcome to Dublin. The time here is 6:22 a.m. The temperature is 57 degrees Fahrenheit. And our congratulations to the couple who became engaged on this flight." The whole long airbus burst into applause.

DUBLIN'S FAIR CITY. LESS SO TODAY. We hadn't seen it since 1956, and it seemed at once more lively and less pretty. Grafton Street, yesterday's showplace of fashion, is now a mall, full of cheap shops and hamburger and pizza joints. But some of the old city clings. One sedate clothing and linen shop still bears the legend "General Drapers." And just around the corner is a pharmacy that still calls itself a "medical hall."

SWEET CHARITY. VERY FEW HOMEless people visible in the streets. Most of the few beggars were young women with small children. The Irish are generous. A number of people were on corners collecting for a Rwanda Appeal, and within three weeks the country raised more than 1 million pounds. Compare that figure proportionately to the United States. Ireland also sent, said T.V., an additional sum to the victims of Chernobyl, which takes Irish aid past the U.N. total for those sufferers.

CAPITAL ASSETS. DUBLIN, TO A NEW Yorker, seems minute. Still, it was the "procreant cradle" of modern English-language literature. Shaw, until the age of 10, lived in a small two-story house, which, since our last visit, has been made into a museum, complete with audio guide. He later called the place "a kennel," and it does seem drab; but it was a tingle to walk through it. (Our hotel was on Molesworth Street where from 1872 to 1876, ages 15 to 19, Shaw worked as a clerk and bookkeeper in a real estate office, an experience that had at least as much effect on him as the blacking factory had on his adored Dickens.) Newman House on St. Stephen's Green, is part of University College. Joyce attended. On the first floor is a so-called Physics Theatre where on October 5, 1899, he addressed the Literary and Historical Society on "Drama and Life." I listened—hard—for echoes. Upstairs is the bedroom-study of Hopkins, who taught here earlier and who died in this building. Next day we drove past Foxrock where Beckett was born and reared. Talk about touching literary bases!

REST, REST, PERTURBÈD SPIRIT. ONE evening we went to see the new production of *The Doctor's Dilemma* at the Abbey. I'm wary of critical comments along the lines of "Shakespeare would have loved [or hated] this production of his play," but it's hard to see how Shaw, who was infuriated by tamperings with his texts, could have been pleased with the inserted business of this production, which (as such business often is) is merely a gross underlining of the author's meaning. The venerable Abbey, like so many theaters, has been invaded by directoritis.

BALANCE OF POWER. ANY AMERICAN who travels knows that foreign newspaper accounts of American doings are much more extensive than American accounts of foreign doings. Nonetheless, it was odd to see an editorial in *The Irish Times* on the House of Representatives' passage of the Clinton crime bill. That bill was still only on its way to becoming law, yet this Irish newspaper thought its congressional progress important. The editorial also commented on Clinton's "health bill" and on his foreign policy troubles in Bosnia, Haiti and Cuba. Obviously there's considerable interest among Irish readers in the inner workings—let alone the results—of American governing.

SO TO SPEAK. IRISH ENGLISH DElights, not only in the (differing) accents but in the locutions. In Drogheda (pronounced Droida) I asked directions of a passerby. He responded fully, and I thanked him. "Thank *you*, sir," he said gravely and walked on. In Sligo we were just wandering about the streets idly and apparently looked lost. A man came up to us and said, "Can I help you at all? I'm a local." When we got back to our car, I asked our driver if she had time for a cup of tea. "Oh, I'm easy," she said, getting out.

DEPT. OF HUDDLED MASSES. ONE EVEning I watched *The Godfather* on Irish T.V. Aside from the fact that Pacino seemed more pallid than ever and Brando seemed even more markedly lacking in Brando power (and his dialogue is stiltedly written), it was particularly interesting to watch this film about the destinies of immigrants in America while sitting at the other end of the immigrant flow. Ireland didn't have anything like the Mafia nexus to export, but in the course of time it supplied its share of both cops (Pat O'Brien) and robbers (James Cagney). The Corleone family lawyer is Irish-American. Sociologists have studied extensively the effect of the New World on different groups of immigrants. Are there studies of the people who stayed at home, what they thought of what had happened to their relatives and friends who went to the United States? (Money aside.) Were they pleased? Dismayed? Alienated? Or did they feel that the changes were simply the price paid for the advantages gained?

POET'S CORNER. COUNTY SLIGO IS Yeats country and is so marked with numerous official road signs. As with many other artists in many countries, he has become an industry. We had visited his grave in 1956, in Drumcliffe "under bare Ben Bulben," and had been absolutely alone in the graveyard. We thought of taking another look at the "cast a cold eye" inscription, but there were three tour buses parked outside the churchyard, so we kept going. One of those road signs points the way to the Lake Isle of Innisfree. What price "the bee-loud glade" now, William B.?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR. THE CORrespondence columns of the newspapers reflect Irish qualities as well as Irish opinions. Two examples.

From *The Sunday Independent*:

> Sir—I was shocked by the language of Molly McAnailly Burke's piece on lesbian rockers, and your allowing it in a family newspaper. The offending phrase "five writhing beauties hot for each other" should be "five writhing beauties hot for one another," since *each other* applies only to two. This panting male cannot allow such looseness to go uncorrected.
> —Sean O'Brien, Rathfarnham, D14

From *The Irish Times*:

> Sir—I fully support the plans for sex education in schools, but I am a little worried by what the children may be given for homework.
> —Yours, etc., G.E. Nairn, Marine Parade, Sandycove, Co. Dublin.

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

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Reshaping Health Care in America

Dr. Walter Broadnax, deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, delivered the keynote address at the 1993 California Public Affairs Forum.

Searching for a Cure

Dismayed by skyrocketing costs and a lack of universal coverage, Americans have made reforming their health care system a top priority. But achieving consensus on a plan of reform is not easy.

That's why the California Public Affairs Forum recently convened a panel of experts to study this issue. The forum is a biennial event sponsored jointly by the California Chamber of Commerce, the Bay Area Council, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and Hitachi, Ltd. Its purpose is to provide a forum for discussion of important issues facing California and the nation. Begun in 1987, the forums have examined state transportation problems, the jobs/housing balance, air quality control, and education reform.

No one on the panel questioned the need for health care reform. "The medical treatment that people in this country get is probably the best in the world. But it costs too much and anywhere from 34 to 37 million of us are not covered," said John Palmer, White House correspondent for Christian Science Monitor radio.

"We have in this country a moral imperative to secure health care for everyone," said Dr. Paul F. Griner, president of the American College of Physicians.

Dr. Griner and the other panelists agree that a national health care system is key to controlling runaway health care costs and eliminating the inequities in the current system. They are optimistic that the U.S. will ultimately adopt such a plan.

Fueling the panel's optimism are signs that many Americans are changing their attitudes about health care. "Health care reform has already begun in this country," said Ms. Julia Thomas, president and CEO of Bobrow / Thomas and Associates, an architectural firm that specializes in health care facilities design. "We've seen a huge move toward managed care, preventive care, and a more educated consumer."

"Health care reform is of great interest to us," said Yoshiro Kuwata, a director of Hitachi. "As an employer of more than 16,000 Americans, we are bound to feel the impact of any change in the nation's health care system."

Dr. Paul F. Griner, president of the American College of Physicians

We at Hitachi share the panel's optimism about the future of health care in the U.S. We are proud to play a role in providing a forum for discussion of issues facing us all.

To obtain copies of the speakers' presentations, please write: Hitachi, P.O. Box 35146, Los Angeles, CA 90035.

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THE BOMBAY SAPPHIRE MARTINI. AS SCULPTED BY ROBERT LEE MORRIS.

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